UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

REPRESENTATION AND MISREPRESENTATION OF THE PURITAN IN ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

AARON MICHAEL MYERS

A THESIS

IN ENGLISH

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PHILADELPHIA
1931

ERRATA

Page 19—Footnote 24—*for* [24] *Ibid,* 4, 1. *read* [24] *Ibid.*, 4, 1.

Page 19—Footnote 25—*for* [25] *Ibid,* 2, 5. *read* [25] *Ibid.,* 2, 5.

Page 36—Line 27—*for* Anabaptist.[90] *read* Anabaptist."[90]

Page 63—Line 12—*for* "be patient Ananias;' *read* "be patient Ananias;"

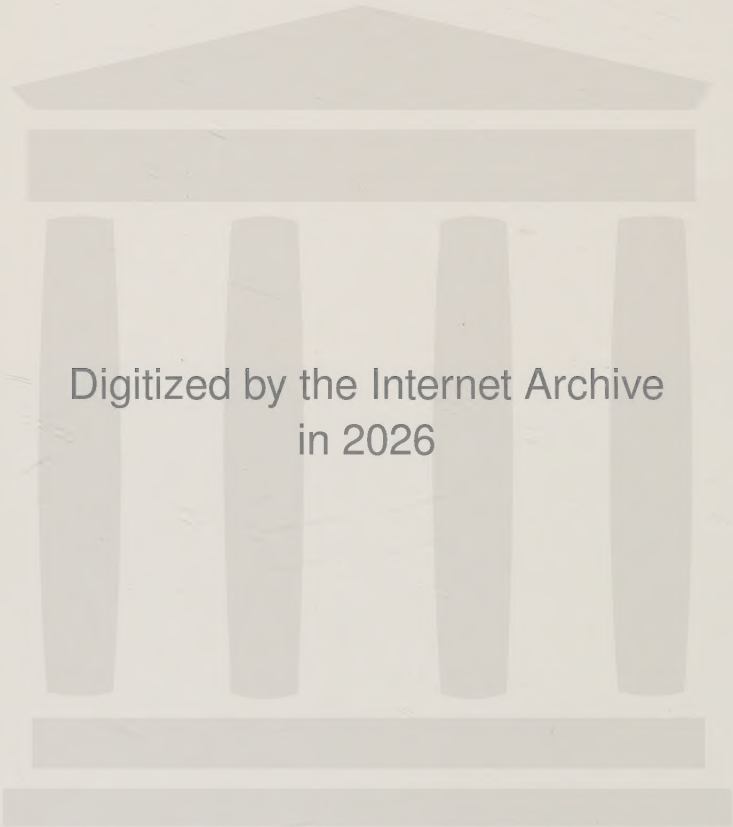
Page 64—Line 6—*for* "A good woman! *read* A good woman!

Page 109—Line 16—*for* the the road *read* the road

Page 110—Line 25—*for* "luke-warm Protestants, *read* "luke-warm Protestants",

Page 150—Lines 1-2—*for* Progresses . . . James 1. *read* "Progresses . . . James 1."

Page 150—Line 34—*for* Schhelling *read* Schelling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PREFACE

The relation of the Elizabethan Puritan to the political, religious and social life of his time has been the subject of innumerable discussions, and the retaliation of the dramatists to the eccentricities of the Puritan and to his opposition to sports and the theater has not gone unnoticed.

This study considers the political and religious background in its relation to both sectaries and dramatists. An effort has been made to find all references made to the Puritans in extant Elizabethan plays, and the aim has been to ascertain the truth regarding the obvious misrepresentation of those whose most serious fault was that they were rebels against convention.

The satire falls into two natural groupings—incidental allusions and longer satires. The casual allusions give vividness to the text, prove how familiar the Puritan was to Elizabethan life, and reveal the true nature of the attack made by the dramatists upon the Puritans. The longer satires comprise parts of scenes, whole scenes and even entire plays, which give complete pictures of individual Puritans and of the various sects.

It is with genuine pleasure that I acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Felix E. Schelling who first suggested this study, and whose constant help and encouragement have been invaluable.

INTRODUCTION

The momentous change in the religious thought of much of Western Europe which historians denominate the Reformation, a change which came in course of time to affect conduct, morals, philosophy, and, above all, politics, came into England in a manner quite different from that in which it entered into the life and thought of other countries. Henry the Eighth, who in his youth had gained from the Pope the proud title of Defender of the Faith, was to live completely to repudiate Papal control and to become of all the princes of Europe the arch enemy of the Papacy. The majority of Henry's people were attached to the older faith; but many of them followed their sovereign in religious matters with but little independence of thought. To do so was the most expedient course for honest, simple-hearted men. But when the King finally renounced his allegiance to Papal authority, more and more of his people began to think for themselves, and in this independence of thought as to religious dogma and observance Puritanism was born.

Within the Established Church the Protestant cause made fruitful advances during the brief reign of Edward the Sixth. The King was tolerant and Parliament made several alterations in favor of the new movement. The restoration of the Roman church and the persecutions of Protestants during the reign of Queen Mary served to inflame rather than to quench the zeal of the reformers. Some of the less violent Protestants met in secret to worship according to the service book of King Edward. Others suffered exile or met in secret groups, abjuring all church ritual and authority and making the Bible and conscience their only guides. The fury of Queen Mary's persecutions drove these dissatisfied people to a more definite expression of their beliefs than would have been called for had they had the protection of the Established Church. The very concealment of their activities promoted a close and unified organization. Thus there came into existence an organized expression of belief at variance not only with the Roman church but also with the Established English ritual, to be dealt with after the troublous times were over.

With the accession of Queen Elizabeth and the restoration of the Established Church to its former state new life for the Reformation was expected. Dissenters at home reappeared, and exiles returned, bringing with them the Genevan form of worship and discipline. The one thing upon which all dissenting groups were united was freedom from everything that savored of the Roman church. The wearing of vestments, the use of organs, the sign of the cross in baptism, and kneeling at communion became odious symbols. The controversy early drew the attention of the new Queen and her Parliament. Queen Elizabeth, however, loved the ceremonies of the older church, and did not favor too much reformation; and when Parliament undertook to act upon religious affairs she took her stand with the conservative group. The Act of Uniformity, refusing the demand for revision of the prayer book and demanding conformity in the conduct of worship, was passed in the first year of Elizabeth's reign. This measure marks a time of definite cleavage between the dissenting and the adhering parties of the church. Instead of all factions, as formerly, being drawn within the church, now small but very zealous and determined groups disputed openly in the pulpits or left the church entirely, to become out-and-out dissenters.

It was at the time when the new Queen and the bishops of the Established Church felt themselves sufficiently powerful and secure to enforce the regulations of the Act of 1559 that those who refused to comply were first called Puritans. "This course against profane Lollards, commonly called Puritans," is the first extant use of the term.[1] As used at this earliest date, the word "Puritan" is manifestly a term of reproach. A century later, Fuller commented upon the term and assigned its first appearance to the year 1564. "The English bishops, conceiving themselves empowered by their canons, began to show their authority in urging the clergy of their dioceses to subscribe to the liturgy, ceremonies, and discipline of the church; and such as refused the same were branded with the odious name of Puritans, a name which in this nation, first began in this year 1564; and the grief had not been great, if it had ended in the same."[2] Ultimately, the word is traceable to the sect of Cathari or Puritani of the third century—a sect which aimed at peculiar purity of life

[1] D. Neal, *History of the Puritans,* Preface, p. 5.
[2] Thomas Fuller, *Church History of Britain,* 2, pp. 474-75.

and doctrine; and it was thus appropriate for Englishmen endeavoring to be particularly circumspect in conversation and morals, and seeking further 'purification' of the church according to the 'pure' New Testament principles. A letter written to King Philip by De Silva, the Spanish ambassador to Elizabeth's court, in 1568, has this to say of the new sect: "They are the same as Calvinists, and they are styled Puritans because they allow no ceremonies nor any forms save those which are authorized by the bare letter of the Gospel. They will not come to the churches which are used by the rest, nor will they allow their minister to wear any marked or separate dress. Some of them have been taken up, but they have no fear of prison, and offer themselves to arrest of their own accord." [3]

The Puritan in Queen Elizabeth's reign was both willing and proud to suffer for his convictions but he writhed under the name applied to him. Puritan leaders avoided it in their writings or mentioned it only to refute its use, while their enemies both on and off the stage needed but to use 'Puritan' to effect an insult. Throughout the Elizabethan Age the Puritans seem never to have become reconciled to the term. William Prynne's abhorrence of the word 'Puritan' was more pronounced in 1633 than any dislike for it found in the writings of half a century earlier. The following is one of his many rejoinders to its use: "But it may be some rash playhouse censurers, out of their gross profaneness, will be ready to censure all the fore-alledged Fathers and modern Christian authors, for *Puritans* or Precisians, and so blow away all these their authorities at one breath, the very title of a Puritan (as of old the *name of a Christian*) being sufficient to dash, to blast them all." [4] At another time, Prynne took a more reasonable attitude toward the word as it was used by his enemies: ". . . there being never poor persecuted word that passed through the mouths of all sorts of unregenerate men with more distastefulness and gnashing of teeth than the name Puritan doth at this day: which notwithstanding as it is now commonly meant, and ordinarily proceeds from the spleen and spirit of profaneness . . . is an honorable nickname of Christianity and grace . . ." [5] Randolph states the discrepancy

[3] J. A. Froude, *History of England*, 9, p. 323.
[4] *Histriomastix*, 1, p. 702.
[5] *Histriomastix*, 1, p. 827.

of the term through the medium of Colax, who is the 'chorus' of his play. "The word Puritan, that I do glorify and esteem reverend, as the most sanctified, pure, and holy sect of all professors, is by the profane us'd for a name of infamy, a byword, a slander." [6]

Turning more specifically to our topic of the Puritan as represented on the stage, we find that there are extant some two score plays, written before 1570, mostly interludes and moralities, several of which are based upon or include more or less spirited discussions of the religious events of the times. In *A Satire of the Three Estates,* written about 1540, the Catholic-Protestant controversy is a frequent topic. The Pardoner, for instance, expresses the wish that Luther and the rest had been smothered in their "chrysom cloths." [7] *Res Publica,* written in 1553, the first year of Queen Mary's reign, shows into how bad a state the country had fallen because of Oppression, (Reformation). As the only surviving play of this period which favored the Catholic side, *Res Publica* is significant of the thorough entrenchment of Protestantism in England at this time. The other plays of this period which treat of religious matters avowedly favor the Reformation. Two moralities, *The Conflict of Conscience* and *Lusty Juventus,* show that though the Reformation was yet in progress, Nonconformity was springing into vigorous existence. The subject matter, where controversial, is didactic and zealous. The writers of these early plays had not yet incurred the wrath of the dissenters, who were no doubt pleased to have their cause so well defended. When the attention of the dramatists is drawn to the dissenters a few decades later the tone is decidedly different.

The interlude, *New Custom,* is an ample illustration of the slowly gathering but potent force of Puritanism in England years before Puritans were generally known by that name. The play is dated 1563, but it was probably written several years earlier. Here are employed the old conventional personifications to set forth many of the matters of controversy which are soon to be known as 'Puritan.' Perverse Doctrine, Ignorance, Cruelty, and Avarice represent rigid conformity, the first two deploring the "upstert" young preachers who disapprove of the ceremonies and rites of the church; and Cruelty

[6] *Muse's Looking Glass,* 2, 4.
[7] ii, 2960-2973.

recounts the former frightful persecutions which he says should be revived. Light of the Gospel is the fanatical minister, the father of all zealous Puritans. He enters in the last scene and converts Perverse Doctrine with his eloquence, his arguments from Holy Writ, and his fiery invectives. Light of the Gospel admonishes thus:

> Then all wicked company you must clean forsake,
> And fly their society as a toad or a snake,
> No, sure; for God weigheth not (who is a sprite)
> Of any vesture or outward appearance a mite,
> So the conscience be pure, and to no sin a slave.

The play ends with these words uttered by Edification:

> Defend thy church, O Christ, and thy holy congregation,
> Both here in England and in every other nation.
> That we thy truth may attain, and still follow the same
> To the salvation of our souls and glory of thy name.

New Custom is a key to the religious situation of the moment and something in the nature of a prophecy as to what it was to become. Light of the Gospel and Perverse Doctrine symbolize the extremes to which each party was to go. The plea for simplicity of worship and the right to make Scriptural authority supreme set forth the main contentions of the real Puritan. In addition, the exhortation to piety and righteous living shows that at the every beginning the Puritan made these the foundation of his faith and that no matter what betrayals occurred nor how distorted the facts were to become in the hands of the dramatists and other enemies, the fundamental principle of Puritanism was always personal righteousness. Cruelty, though using the tone of the previous reign, none the less foreshadows some of the calamities that were to come upon those who would refuse to adhere to the principles of the Established Church.

The Queen and the high clergy encountered stiff opposition when rigid conformity was commanded. The more intelligent leaders among the non-conformists sought relief from Parliament. A certain portion of the nation was so inflamed that nothing short of the terrors of Queen Mary's reign could have kept them in bounds. Many of the common people so abhorred ceremonial habits that they considered it a sin to frequent the churches in which they were used. They sometimes remained outside the church until the first part of

the service was over and the sermon about to be preached. Many ministers deserted their stations rather than wear what to them were "badges of idolatry." Neal says in this regard: "To gird these injunctions close upon the Puritans, there was appointed in every parish four or eight censors, spies, or jurists, to take cognizance of all offenses taken or given. These were under oath enjoined to take particular notice of the conformity of the clergy and of the parishioners, and to give in their presentments when required, so that it was impossible for an honest Puritan to escape the high commission."[8] It is estimated that at one time as many as one-fourth of the clergy were under suspension. Many preachers were put in prison and their pulpits closed. As a result, more and more congregations were formed, stealthily at first, meeting in homes, fields, woods, even in ships on the rivers. The pastors and their flocks were threatened with civil excommunication and severe punishment unless they returned to their parish churches; but the rapid increase in their numbers gave them courage and made the authorities less bold, so that, in some of the more populous centers, meeting places were hired and services conducted more or less publicly.

In 1583 the Queen appointed forty-four Commissioners and authorized them to correct and punish all manner of heresies and offenses against the Church. This was designed to crush the Puritans, for it gave them only the choice of strict conformity, or fines, suspension, and imprisonment. Persecutions became a commonplace, and large portions of the population, including many who were not Puritans, viewed with uneasiness the means used to quell those who could not be subdued. The Martin Marprelate Tracts, a series of pamphlets for the most part anonymously published and attacking the government and the Bishops for the attempt to repress all deviation from orthodoxy, appeared five years after the appointment of the High Commission, and constituted the vigorous answer of the younger and more radical element to the conservative group which was directing the prosecutions of the Puritans. In the conclusion of the *Epistle* Martin thus exhorts the prelates: "Abuse not the High Commission as you do, against the best subjects. The commission itself was ordained for the very good purposes, but it is most horribly abused by you, and turned clear contrary to the end wherefore it

[8] *History of the Puritans,* 1, p. 144.

was ordained." The popularity of Martin Marprelate was only increased by the efforts of the Queen to apprehend the author or authors and the tracts were given only the greater notoriety by the attempted refutations of the Bishops and their adherents. It was said that upon one occasion the Earl of Essex took a copy of one of the forbidden tracts out of his bosom and handed it to the Queen, and students of Oxford and Cambridge were reported to have carried them hidden in the folds of their gowns.[9] The attitude of the moderate Puritans is nowhere more clearly manifest than in this matter. Cartwright and other sober-minded leaders who wished their cause to be presented with dignity rather than with violence disapproved of the tracts.

The Marprelate attack was the occasion for the first definite retaliation on the part of the dramatists. In Nash we find mention of "the anatomie latelie taken of him (Martin), the blood and the humours that were taken from him, by launcing and worming him to London upon the common stage."[10] John Lyly is also known to have taken part in the controversy by writing abusive comedies, now unhappily lost, and when these satirical plays became so popular that the Master of the Revels had to suppress them, it was Lyly who voiced the regret of all these dramatists when he said: "Would these Comedies might be allowed to be plaid that are pend, and then I am sure he (Martin) would be decyphered and so perhaps discouraged."[11] Some of the pamphlets written by Nash and Lyly have been preserved and go to show that the ridicule from the stage must easily have matched the scurrility of the Martinist Tracts themselves. Bacon very aptly remarks that these pamphlets treated religion "in the style of the stage."[12] To what extent the Marprelate controversy was responsible for the greater frequency of jibes against the Puritans in the plays after 1590 is a matter for conjecture, but it is certain that the tracts placed the Puritans in the limelight as never before and resulted in a renewal of persecutions against them. John Penry, whose alleged participation in the Martinist agitation was antecedent to his indictment for treason, was hanged in 1593. At this time there were others who lost their lives and whom, with

[9] See J. Gregory, *Puritanism,* p. 158.
[10] *Countercuff to Martin Junior,* Grosart, Nash, 1, p. 77.
[11] *Pappe With an Hatchet,* p. 408. -ed. Bond.
[12] *Rescuscitatio,* pp. 162-179.

Penry, the Puritans declared to be martyrs to their cause. This martyrdom may very easily have been hastened by a famous debate in the House of Commons in 1593, when Sir Walter Raleigh stated that there were 20,000 Brownists in England.[13] Granting a large margin for the very evident exaggeration, this, nevertheless, indicates the hold which Puritanism had upon large groups of the people and the concern it occasioned in the court. A still more stringent measure was passed in 1593, enacting imprisonment for those over sixteen years of age who refused to attend the Established Church, with a further provision of banishment if they persisted, and a final sentence of death if they returned from exile. These provisions were, however, seldom vigorously pressed. Toward the close of Queen Elizabeth's reign a partial cessation of hostilities ensued, due to the infirmities of the Queen and the uneasiness of both religious factions over the turn that affairs might take with the new reign.

When King James ascended the throne in 1603 the prelates curried favor with him by expressing their devotion, while the Puritans hoped that he would favor them because of his Calvinist rearing and his oft-repeated friendliness to their cause. So many petitions were presented to the King that a conference of the opposing groups was called at Hampton Court in 1604. There the King definitely allied himself with the High Church faction and the Puritans found that no royal concession was to be made to their demands. Before the first Parliament met a proclamation was issued stating that there was to be no indulgence of conscience and that all who did not conform to the church must expect the extremities of the law. Accordingly, persecution was renewed with greater vigor, accompanied by the usual consequences of increased zeal and new adherents. Many ministers and their followers were obliged to leave the kingdom. As in the former reign, a large percentage of them went to Amsterdam, Leyden, Utrecht, The Hague, and other towns in the Low Countries, some wandering farther into Germany and to Calvinist Geneva.

Up to this time the conflict had for the most part remained within the boundaries of religion, but when King James, in addition to his rulings on conformity, stressed and proclaimed the royal prerogative, the divine right of kings, and the duty of passive obedi-

[13] See S. D'Ewes, *Journal of All the Parliaments During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth,* p. 517.

ence, the contest at once assumed a political as well as a religious character. During the long reign of Elizabeth the contention had been almost wholly a religious one. No one, not even the most extreme Puritans, questioned The Act of Supremacy, which gave to the Crown jurisdiction over the State, both ecclesiastical and spiritual, and which passed simultaneously with the much opposed Act of Uniformity. The royal prerogative was forbidden ground. Early in Elizabeth's reign, Peter Wentworth, a Puritan and a member of the House of Commons, asserted that the Sovereign was ruler by the will of the people rather than in his own right. The House fell into an uproar of protest and Wentworth was imprisoned for a time. The Court of High Commission brought a storm of opposition but its enemies avowed in the same breath their devotion to the Queen. When the most serious accusation was sought to justify persecution of the Puritans this charge of disloyalty was made, though it was no doubt often most unfair and untrue—like the many other misrepresentations of the Puritans. The people of England had unbounded confidence in their sovereign, her will was law, and even though some objected to certain of her measures, all were united in loyalty to the Queen's personality.

The claims made by King James as to the royal prerogatives were scarcely more extreme than those held by his predecessor, but he had not the art of divining the wishes of his people and the limits to which he might safely go in opposing them. That the King had definitely allied himself with the leaders of the Established Church was not so important as his failure to realize that the Puritans had become a really important party in England, that they even had a majority in his first Parliament, meeting in 1604. By assuming a religious prerogative the King immediately found himself obliged to assert others in order to enforce the first, and it was at this point that the people and Parliament saw their civil liberties threatened. Those who had contended for freedom in the Church became leaders in the political contentions and many Englishmen who had evinced no interest in the religious disputes now joined with the Puritan party in order to obtain constitutional liberty.

The reign of King James was destined to be a series of parliamentary battles over the rising spirit of popular government. In 1604 the King refused to redress the ecclesiastical grievances as demanded

by the Commons, and instead put greater pressure upon the Nonconformists. He then proceeded to levy duties without the consent of Parliament. Failing in this, he dissolved Parliament in 1611. For three years King James ruled without a Parliament, but the body which convened in 1614 refused to grant supplies unless certain abuses, first among them those of the Church, were righted. After two months the King dissolved this Parliament and ruled alone for seven years more. Two other short sessions convened but the King could not check the rising tide, even though he went so far as to forbid Parliament to discuss matters of state and himself tore out pages of their protestation from the House Journal. Pym, Eliot, Wentworth and Hampden were among the leaders who opposed the arbitrary policies of the King. By their enemies, all who differed with the King were dubbed "Puritans"; but not all of these leaders were really Puritans and many others who had no scruples whatsoever about conformity were willing to join with the Puritans. The latter part of King James' reign gave added cause for bitterness. The life of the court was notoriously frivolous, and when the King authorized *The Book of Sports* in 1618 and required it to be read in all the churches, the Puritans felt that worldly vices were being literally thrust upon them. *The Book of Sports* provided that all legal games and recreations might be indulged in after divine service on the Sabbath; in fact, it strongly advised such indulgence. The provisions themselves and what they called profaning the Sabbath were sufficient to arouse all Puritans; but to compel the act to be read in the churches was a folly which even the King soon recognized, for he did not demand compliance.

Hope for moderation was again revived upon the accession of Charles the First, but he was counselled by bishops and other advisers to assert the same prerogatives as did his father. As heretofore, Parliament reacted by controlling the treasury and King Charles dissolved three Parliaments in four years. For eleven years England was governed without a Parliament. The King was forced to secure funds by fines or forced loans, by collecting duties without legal authority, and by selling monopolies. At the same time, Archbishop Laud and other prelates renewed the pressure upon Puritans and revived the question of Sunday sports by demanding that every minister read the declaration from his pulpit. The combination of

these civic and religious grievances produced an intolerable situation in which Englishmen arrayed themselves against the Church and forgot their loyalty to the King. The crisis came with the assembling of the Long Parliament in 1640. The Puritan party was now so thoroughly entrenched and set about redressing wrongs with such a vengeance that the King was forced to give way in more than one particular. The time for conciliation had passed and when the King was forced to leave Whitehall early in 1642 a Civil War had burst upon England.

In turning from this historical background to its representation in the drama of the day, it is necessary first of all to enumerate several of the more zealous and better known sects. This in turn will show the extent of the schisms, point out certain marked qualities and peculiarities of the followers, and justify, at least to a certain extent, the extremities of misrepresentation to which some of the dramatists went. The very existence of so many beliefs must have seemed anomalous to the dramatists. Jonson jests ironically about "branched doctrine";[14] and Glapthorne makes an observation about "opinions far more various than all the sectaries of Amsterdam had ever vented."[15]

The Anabaptists seem to have been the oldest of these dissenting groups and to have held the most extreme views concerning the Reformation. Anabaptism was, in reality, a foreign importation, fanatical followers of Münzer and Buckhold having begun their flights from the persecutions in Germany and the Netherlands as early as the third decade of the sixteenth century. In England they were subjected to oppressions scarcely less severe, deportation being the mildest punishment, while numbers of the refugees and their English adherents were burned at the stake. The English clergy saw in the Anabaptist movement the same dangers which for over a century they had fought against under the term "Lollardy." The "Wycliffite heretics" as these older adherents were called had insisted on a translation of the Bible for the masses and had condemned many of the practices and ceremonies of the Church. Under Henry the Fifth the movement was checked among the aristocracy by the famous trial of Sir John Oldcastle, but among the humbler people of some

[14] *The Magnetic Lady*, 1, 1.
[15] *Wit in a Constable*, 2, 1.

of the Eastern counties Lollardy was a persistent force until the time of the English Reformation. Then the name 'Lollard' seems to have disappeared but the principles of this earliest group of independents may be identified as part of the doctrine of the English Anabaptists. These latter held substantially the same doctrines as the most extreme Puritans. The Anabaptists recognized the duty of passive obedience to government but they refused to bear arms, hold office, take oaths, or resort to law-courts. Their denial of the validity of infant baptism and insistence on re-baptism as a condition of admission to their sect were the tenets directly responsible for the name applied to them by their enemies. Randolph makes an amusing reference to their distinguishing doctrine. "First we made him a dipper; we ducked him over head and ears in water, and then we made him an anabaptist." [16] As the Puritans became stronger and as their name came to embrace many varieties of belief they apparently assimilated this older group of Anabaptists. The name Anabaptist, however, persisted throughout the Elizabethan period and was applied by the dramatists infrequently and with loose meaning to any who rejected the Anglican doctrine. A herald in *News from the New World* exclaims about a "world of doppers," meaning Anabaptists, and identifies them as "lunatic persons, walkers only: that have leave only to *Hum* and *Ha,* not daring to prophesy, or start up upon stools to raise doctrine." [17]

The Brownists are believed to have formed the "first organized Separatist Church," about 1580.[18] Their founder was Robert Browne, a clergyman of good family but a man of unregulated zeal, who, it seems likely, courted persecution and notoriety. The Brownists advocated the entire separation of Church and State. They taught that the Established Church was the "synagogue of Satan" and claimed the right to form a congregation subject only to the authority of the Gospel. They knew no spirit of compromise nor was any moderation shown them. By the State they were considered rebels and this attitude was partially justified by the political bias of their tenets. Persecutions were continually directed against them, the sect being probably one of the most reviled and bitterly pursued

[16] *Hey for Honesty,* 3, 3.
[17] Vol. 3, p. 137.
[18] E. H. Byington, *The Puritan in England and New England,* p. 160.

of all the fanatical groups. Lodowick Barry, in the first scene of *Ram Alley,* speaks of the Brownists frequenting gravel pits. As individuals they were extremely pious. This extreme piety, and the abuse by a few of the protection extended to them by the group, drew the full ire of the dramatists. For the next half century the most violent thrusts are aimed at the Brownists. Their fanaticism and their revolutionary church doctrines were patent, but other enormities of conduct and opinion attributed to them were no doubt often grossly exaggerated. The feeling of the large body of Puritans themselves toward this sect, or at least toward its name, is shown in the statement made by the Puritan leader, John Robinson, as he was giving the Pilgrims their final exhortations as they were about to sail for America. "I must also advise you to abandon, avoid, and shake off the name of Brownists; it is a mere nickname, and a brand for the making religion and the professors of it odious to the Christian world." [19]

The Family of Love, though a small sect, was also very greatly abused. In 1580 the Queen issued a proclamation against its members, citing heresy, fanaticism, and even mentioning the certain peculiar forms of speech which were enjoined and practiced. Familists infuriated other religious groups by claiming that they alone were sanctified and by denouncing all other churches. They, like many other strict Puritans, refused to take the oath before magistrates, and at various times were persecuted for holding conventicles or secret meetings. Speaking of their founder, Fuller writes: "Not content to confine his errors to his own country, over he comes into England, and in the latter end of the reign of Edward the Sixth joyned himself to the Dutch congregation in London, where he seduced a number of artificers and silly women. . ." [20] The trait which most definitely distinguished the Familists was their mystical and allegorical philosophy. They were constantly charged with turning the Scriptures into meaningless jargon and they indulged in many preposterous prophecies of coming political events. The pretensions of their founder, Henry Nicholas, were visionary and chimerical. His main doctrine was that the feelings of divine love constituted religion, and all other tenets, whether of faith or modes

[19] Neal, 1, p. 447.
[20] *Church History,* 2, p. 519.

of worship, were of no moment, providing the hearts of his followers burned with piety and love. Immoral practices were popularly associated with the Family of Love, or Lust, as it was sometimes vilely caricatured, but this their leader stoutly denied and there was no proof of the charge. Their speech, their mystical piety, and especially the ill-founded charge of licentiousness made them the butt of ridicule for the dramatists. Although the Family of Love was as unrepresentative of the Puritans at large as it was unimportant in numbers, yet it no doubt served its purpose in reaching that emotionally unstable class of people which is to be found in every generation. The disciples of the Family were shunned by the more moderate adherents of the Puritan faith, as were the Brownists. None the less, this Family of Love, early in the reign of King James, presented a petition to the King begging to be cleared of misrepresentation and to be separated in his thought of them from 'those Puritans whom they knew to be odious to him.'

Besides these early and more or less notorious sects there were others which were coming into notice and prominence before the Elizabethan period closed. During the Queen's reign Presbyterian views had found their exponent in Thomas Cartwright, but Presbyterianism was not well known to the playwrights, at least by that name, until later. Gough's second Introduction to *The Queen,* written sometime before 1642, mentions the Presbyters that had once dwelt in Blackfriars and how they had "prayed and thriv'd though the playhouse were so near." Brome has his jest about "Sir Presbyter" whom he recognizes as a "thrifty Covenanter." [21] Contrary to Brome's intention, the words are really in the nature of a compliment to that large group in Scotland which had made a covenant to maintain Presbyterianism as the religion of their country. The author of *Hey for Honesty* (or those who later made emendations) is more or less obsessed by the idea of the Presbyters and their directorizing methods, giving a hint of the vigorous opposition, on the part of certain groups of Puritans, to the dominance of Presbyterianism.[22] One character laughs about how he must appear at the Assembly at Westminster (1643);[23] and another sneers at a

[21] *The Court Beggar,* 3, 1.
[22] (2, 5; 2, 7; 3, 3.)
[23] *Ibid.,* 2, 6.

"fat Presbyter" and at the "Sir John Presbyters." [24] Levellers and Independents are also noted, the latter being those who had formerly gone by the name Brownists.[25] By the close of the Elizabethan period even the Quaker is to figure in one or two plays as a peculiar sort of stage Puritan.

Doctrines, beliefs, and practices aside, it was the Puritan precision in speech, manners and conduct, an affected simplicity in dress, and a tendency to overzeal, that attracted the shafts of ridicule of the earlier dramatists. Because this satire was based only too obviously on fact, it furnished excellent and legitimate dramatic material for the stage. Puritans who would not tolerate vestments, observe fasts, listen to organs, permit the sign of the cross, take oaths, or do many other things which other Elizabethans considered harmless or of no consequence, were naturally abused for their magnification of what their enemies thought trifles and accused of flaunting their moral superiority and their exceptional virtues. Zealous Puritans, far from denying the accusation, gloried in their unyielding fidelity to conviction and in the scrupulous observance of much that made them ridiculous. Those who were truly pious observed the principle; but only too many manifestations of humility went to preposterous extremes. This record, for example, has been preserved concerning Robert Bolton, an Oxford scholar and an ardent Puritan during the reign of King James and King Charles. "He preached twice every Lord's day, besides catechising. Upon every holy day, and every Friday before the sacrament, he expounded a chapter: his constant course was to pray six times a day, twice in secret, twice with his family, twice with his wife, besides many days of private humiliation that he observed for the Protestant churches in Germany." [26]

The turbulent spirits among the various sects and even the overpious did not make up the majority of the Puritan group. Everywhere in England there were good and humble men who were distressed because they could not conscientiously conform, but who lived quietly, though devoutly and strictly, and with no desire for strife. The following description, about 1600, is no doubt a more accurate picture of the average Elizabethan Puritan than most of the ludicrous

[24] *Ibid,* 4, 1.
[25] *Ibid,* 2, 5.
[26] Neal, 1, p. 547.

caricatures which the dramatists were then drawing. "It was a distinguishing mark of a Puritan in these times, to see him going to church twice a day with his Bible under his arm: and while others were at plays and interludes, at bowling, fencing, etc., on the evening of the Sabbath, these with their families were employed in reading Scriptures, singing psalms, catechising their children, repeating sermons, and prayer; nor was this only the work of the Lord's day, but they had their hours of family devotion on the week-days, esteeming it their duty to take care of the souls as well as the bodies of their servants. They were circumspect as to all the excesses of eating, drinking, apparel, and lawful diversions, being frugal in housekeeping, industrious in their particular callings, honest and exact in their dealings, and solicitous to give to everyone his own." [π]

In contrast to this kindly picture of a precisian is the dramatists' constant featuring of the Puritan as a rude and ignorant man or woman. Gluttony, forwardness, a rasping speech, and general boorishness are the attributes commonly assigned to the Puritans in Elizabethan plays. Most of the longer characterizations which the dramatists made presuppose or actually represent the Puritan as an ignorant and presumptuous man. He is made to argue in an absurd and inconsequent manner about matters of which he knows little or nothing. Stupido, Goggle, Busy, Mistress Flowerdew, Bird, and several others are personages whose blatant ignorance is their basic characteristic. And gluttony is often alleged, as notably in Jonson's Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, whereas it is not to be denied that frugality and simplicity were among the fundamental virtues of the Puritan faith. The peculiarities of Puritan speech had much basis in fact, for it was affected by some as a badge of simplicity; but after all, this was not a universal characteristic. Boldness and rudeness were contrary to the virtues cherished by the Puritans, but the rigid plainness and the over-zeal of many Puritans may have to some extent justified this charge. The large mass of Puritans were humble people and a portion of them no doubt were unlettered. Fortunately, there is abundant proof that among Elizabethan Puritans there were many men of culture and learning. Many of the leaders were gradu-

[π] Neal, 1, p. 380.

ates of Oxford and Cambridge. John Cartwright, and even the fanatical Robert Browne were university men. Quarlous says in *Bartholomew Fair:* "I knew divers of these Banburians when I was at Oxford." [28] That the Puritans had a fair share of the learning and culture of their age is a conservative statement.

The most common accusation against the moral integrity of the Puritan was that of hypocrisy.

> Peace (puritan) dissembling hypocrite,
> Which art so good that thou would prove start naught,[29]

are the words of Goneril in *King Leir,* dated 1594. Occasional thrusts at this evil are found in early plays and seem to spring from a feeling of irritation at assumed superiority and paraded virtue. The Puritan's precision of conduct and the delight he took in asserting his 'differences' seemed to his pleasure-loving enemies to proceed from nothing but a despicable hypocrisy. With the increase, near the turn of the century, in the current of satire against sectaries they became the very symbol of hypocrisy. Fleeting references to this are commonplace and scarcely a characterization of any length fails to illustrate with one or more examples this particular failing. There are several favorite forms in which Puritan hypocrisy is presented by the dramatists. One of the more innocent jests concerns the vanity of the Puritans, particularly the vanity of feminine adherents. Chapman, Jonson, Randolph, and others make great sport of this human frailty, and they frequently heighten the picture by presenting their Puritans as sellers of vanities, even taking them into the theatres to dispose of their baubles. This was the height of raillery, but it was the sort of exaggeration that remained within the limits of mere mischief. Judging from the numerous references, it is quite possible that some Puritans dealt in trinkets, feathers in particular, but the rather meagre foundation in fact, contrasted with the splendid possibilities of such situations, accounts for the popularity of this form of hypocrisy.

Dramatists frequently pictured Puritans as dishonest rogues plying their schemes under the guise of piety. The first play to present such a portrait of a Puritan is *A Knack to Know a Knave* (dated 1592). The knave here is a Puritan who conceals his mean-

[28] 1,1.
[29] W. C. Hazlitt, Shakespeare's Library, 6, p. 384.

ness and bribery under the disguise of the word "priest", but admits to himself that he is a dissembling hypocrite:

> Thus preach we still unto our brethren,
> Though in our hearts we never mean the thing:
> Thus do we blind the world with holiness,
> And by that are termed pure Precisians.

Jonson represents several of his Puritan characters—Ananias, Tribulation, Busy—as essentially dishonest, and illumines several of his scenes with detailed accounts of their transactions. Other dramatists are more unfair in other respects, but no playwright more persistently and cleverly unmasks the Puritan as a rascal. This charge was maintained by lesser dramatists throughout the period. There was doubtless much justification for these charges in individual instances, and when the religious and civil issues were fused more opportunity than ever was given for adventurers, fanatics, and self-seeking men to hide under the cloak of Puritanism; but to imply that dishonesty was a common Puritan vice was contrary to fact and most unjust.

The accusation of immorality is one which not all the dramatists stooped to make. Shakespeare and Jonson had no part in it. Middleton and his followers are the worst offenders, but others add not a little to the considerable volume of this sort of satire. Languebeau Snuffle in Tourneur's *Atheist's Tragedy* (dated 1603) is probably the foulest and most grossly misrepresented of all Puritan characters. The very viciousness of the indictment makes it utterly absurd, and such charges are not worthy of comment except for the fact that they were made by a number of the dramatists.

Whatever may be true of the dramatists' representation of Puritan hypocrisy and immorality, they very assuredly were not incorrect when they charged these people with intolerance. To be sure, intolerance was not exclusively nor particularly Puritan—all sects of the time were intolerant—but it was this characteristic of the Puritans, added to their irritating assumption of self-righteousness, which goaded their enemies to satirize and lampoon them most unmercifully. This spirit of intolerance accounts for a great deal of the natural antipathy which existed between Puritans and the stage.

When English theatres were first built, about 1576, the Puritan element immediately sensed danger. In a sermon preached at St.

Paul's Cross in 1577 this quaint warning is found: "Look but upon the common plays in London, and see the multitude that flocketh to them and followeth them: behold the sumptuous Theatre houses, continual monument of London's prodigality and folly. But I understand they are now forbidden because of the plague. I like the policy well if it hold still, for a disease is but bodged or patched up that is not cured in the cause, and the cause of plagues is sin, if you look to it well: and the cause of sin are plays: therefore the cause of plagues are plays." [30]

The Puritan aversion to the theatres grew with the years and was by no means without a certain justification in regard to these places of license and freedom. In the Acts of the Privy Council for 1593 may be found a letter to the vice chancellor of Cambridge stating that "there maie no plaies or interludes of common players be used or sett forthe", lest the students be "allured or inticed" to "lewdness, folly and vitious manners." [31] Another letter orders the "Curtayne Theatre or anie other common playhouse" to be dismantled, since her Majesty has been informed "that there are verie greate disorders committed in the common playhouses both by lewd matters that are handled on the stages and by resort and confluence of bad people. . . ." [32] The Acts of the Council reveal further restrictions that were placed upon playhouses and players because of complaints regarding "the manyfolde abuses and disorders that have growen and do contynue by occasion of so many houses erected and employed in and about the city of London for common stage-playes. . . . it is manifestly knowen and graunted that the multitude of the saide houses and the mysgovernment of them hath been and is dayly occasion of the ydle, ryotous and dissolute living of great numbers of people, that leaving all such honest and painefull course of life as they should followe, doe meete and assemble here, and of many particular abuses and disorders that do thereupon ensue. . . ." [33]

These were, in the main, the Puritan objections to the theatre, but it must be admitted that their aversion was often due to lack of real knowledge of the theatre and theatrical conditions, for the

[30] Arden, Introduction to *School of Abuse,* English Reprints, 1.
[31] Vol. 24.
[32] 1597, Vol. 27.
[33] 1600, Vol. 30.

strict Puritan was not a frequenter of even the vicinity of playhouses. On this basis, the dramatists loved to create a situation where a protesting Puritan goes to the theatre and there finds his horror gradually change to enthusiasm. However, the pressure which the Puritans exerted against the theatre was based not only on godliness but also on a recognition of the necessity of law and order. This pressure became so strong that public performances on the Sabbath were forbidden by the Mayor in the city of London, although, greatly in contrast, during the reign of Elizabeth's successors, balls, masques, and plays were enjoyed by the court on Sunday evenings. It was, however, a common feeling of the day, even among non-Puritans, that play-going on the Sabbath was a profanation of the sacred day. George Whetstone, himself a dramatist, censured the use of plays on Sunday.

The best elaboration of the extreme Puritan attitude toward the theatres is found in William Prynne's *Histriomastix,* which appeared in 1633. In the Epistle Dedicatory, Prynne says: "For having upon my first arrival here in London, heard and seen in four several plays (to which the pressing importunity of some ill acquaintance drew me while I was yet a novice) such wickedness, such lewdness as then made my penitent heart to loathe, my conscience to abhor all stage plays since: and having likewise then observed some woeful experience of the lewd, mischievous fruits of Plays, of Play-houses in some young gentlemen of my acquaintance, who though civil and chaste at first, became so vicious, prodigal, incontinent, deboist, (yea so far past hopes of all amendment) in half a year's space or less, by their resort to Plays, where whores and lewd companions had inveigled them, that after many vain assays of their much-desired reformation, two of them were cast off, and utterly disinherited by their loving parents. . . ." Concerning the plays themselves, Prynne expatiates most fully. "Do not the ordinary themes and subjects of our modern comedies, being nothing else but the adulteries, rapes, love-passions, meretritious, unchaste, and amorous practices, of lascivious wicked men, or heathen idol-gods; which should not then be so much as named, (much less than acted) among Christians? Do not these wanton, whorish, lustful parts; those ribaldrous songs, and filthy ditties, those meretritious and unchaste attires, looks and gestures; those amorous and lustful compliments, kissings, clippings, and em-

bracements: those lively, if not real representations, or ocular demonstrations of the very acts of whoredom, and adultery, which are usually represented to us in the theatre: together with all obscene, and filthy jests; those scurrilous, and beastly passages, those quaint, subtle, rhetorical, and flexanimous strains of contemplative, elegant, and witty obscenities, with which our plays are fraught and interlaced: the very sight, and hearing of which, should cause all modest eyes to blush, and weep; all Christian ears to glow, and tingle; all chaste, and gracious hearts, to mourn and bleed: do not all these (I say) proclaim, and testify to the world; that the style and subject matter; yea, the very action, circumstances, and appendice of our popular Stage-plays, are scurrilous, and obscene." [34] Prynne was particularly severe in his censure of plays and masques at Court. It was in this connection that Shirley became indignant and joined in the dispute with the Puritans.

We have seen above that there was at least a grain of justification for this fanatical viewpoint. Glapthorne, in *Wit in a Constable,* produced in 1639, has a young blade rather unwittingly expose conditions when he says: "but we are gentlemen, ladies, and no city foreman that never dare be ventrous on a beauty, unless when wenches take them up at plays to entice them at the next licentious Tavern to spend a supper on them." [35] Such extremes of licentiousness and religious fervor made the strife irreconcilable. Dramatists who had no interest in the Puritans as men, were of necessity interested in the preservation of the theatres, and these condemned the Puritans unsparingly for their attitude toward legitimate pleasures of all kinds, especially those of the theatre. Beaumont and Fletcher, Shirley, Davenant, and Jonson in his last plays, as well as others of the later dramatists, entered the warfare against the Puritans mainly for this reason. It must also be remembered that near the end of our period only the less serious minded were left as patrons of the theatre, Puritanism having gradually weaned away all the godly, both in the court and among the common people. The increasing immoral note in some of the later plays—in particular those of Ford—was in no small measure responsible for the unamicable conditions.

[34] *Histriomastix,* part 1, p. 70.
[35] 2, 1.

The Puritan's constant and bitter agitation against the theatres is indicative of his intolerant attitude toward sports and amusements of all kinds. And his whole general attitude of aggressive intolerance was the direct and contributing cause back of all the great body of satire levelled against him in Elizabethan drama. This attitude is, moreover, a measure of the intolerance which led him to resist Church authority, and it even suggests the reason for the many schisms within his own group. It cannot be denied that his own bitter, censorious behaviour brought upon him much of the indignity and injustice he bore both in and out of the drama, and since but little forbearance was shown the Puritan either by the Church or by the State there is no cause for wonder that his by far more natural enemies, the dramatists, should be lacking in the virtue of toleration, although this does by no means absolve from all blame the many dramatists who so wilfully and so bitterly misrepresented a great body of their fellow countrymen.

CHAPTER ONE

Incidental and casual allusions to Puritans are not infrequent in Elizabethan plays and go far to show how familiar to Elizabethan life was the Puritan. Like other transcripts from actual life, such references give vividness to the text even while distorting by way of caricature what we have every reason to believe was the truth regarding these rebels against convention.

The reading of over two score plays extant from 1570-1580 discloses no mention of the Puritans, and, with but few exceptions, the following decade is equally devoid of any such allusions. During the late eighties and early nineties mere allusions are occasionally found. Indeed, as early as 1585 we find one jibe of the kind in *Arden of Feversham,* the well-known murder play. Here a ruffian named Shakebag, disgusted with the foreboding of a comrade as to the prospects of a meditated crime, asks, "How, now, Will, become a precisian?" [36] *Doctor Faustus,* written three years later, also identifies the Puritans with the Precisians.[37] Throughout Elizabethan drama this term is used as the equivalent of 'Puritan.' Middleton, inveterate satirist of the Puritans a decade or so later, best explains the relation between the words where, in *The Family of Love,* a certain character insists that "love's as proper to a courtier as preciseness to a Puritan." [38] In *Mucedorus,* a sprightly comedy dated 1598, there is a bit of mocking at the Puritan observation of certain days of fast, here put in the mouth of Mouse the clown. The question being that of thrift, Mouse says: "Well I'll carry home my bottle of hay, and for once let my father's horse turn Puritan, and observe fasting days, for he gets not a bit." [39] Here, however, we have the word "Puritan" itself.

Elsewhere there is a considerable latitude in the use of the words. The Brownists, that extreme sect, were frequently taken to typify all Puritans. Thus in the play of *Sir Thomas More,* dated about

[36] 3, 2.
[37] Scene 2.
[38] 3, 2.
[39] Scene 2.

1593, but relating to events of a half century earlier, one Faulkner, who has taken a vow not to cut his hair or trim his beard, but who is forced to the breaking of his vow by the authority of More, declares: "If my hair stand not on end when I look for my face in a glass, I am a polecat. Here's a lousy jest, but if I watch not that rogue Tom Barber, that makes me look thus like a Brownist, hang me." [40] Of course there were no Brownists in the days of Henry the Eighth, even as there were as yet no Puritans. Such anachronisms merely translate the earlier expression into the terms of the familiar Elizabethan present. A like example is found in the second part of the Gesta Grayorum, one of the most extended of the elaborate entertainments of the Inns of Court offered the Queen in 1584, where the word "Anabaptist" is employed with similar looseness. "I am a ship of darkness, my father a Jesuit, my mother an Anabaptist." [41] Near the very end of our period, Randolph uses the same term in a similar loose sense. Carion remarks that a certain newly appointed poet shall "make ballads on all the hypocrites of the town; he shall rhyme all the Anabaptists out of their wits." [42] And when, in *The Massacre of Paris*, dated 1593, we meet with "kill the Puritans" [43] and "overthrow these factious Puritans," [44] it is clear that the word is simply a substitute for the popular apprehension of 'Huguenot'—a term which was no doubt unfamiliar to an Elizabethan audience.[45] Moreover, to clarify his use of the word 'Puritan' the Cardinal assures his hearers that "'tis the house of Bourbon that he means." [46].

In a different manner, the author of *Sir John Oldcastle* uses similar events, customs, and eccentricities as a basis for the representation of the political and religious disturbances of Henry the Fifth's reign in the fourteenth century. Here the terms 'Protestant,' 'heretic,'

[40] P. 51.
[41] Part 2.
[42] *Hey for Honesty,* 5, 1.
[43] Scene 14.
[44] Scene 19.
[45] Campbell says that the Walloons from the Netherlands were often called Huguenots in England, particularly in Canterbury. 1, p. 489. There is a passing allusion to "Huguenot women" in *The Family of Love,* 1, 2. Apropos of this, Campbell asserts that during the Elizabethan period men of like religious beliefs were called Puritans in Holland as well as in England. 1, p. 90.
[46] Scene 14.

and 'Puritan' identify those of the earlier movement of Lollardy. 'Gospellers' is another expression, one used by R. Wilson as he jestingly mentions the religious immigrants from the Continent, whom the Queen permitted to come into England. Accused of filling the land with aliens, the Mariner stoutly asserts that he brings in only "Gospellers" and "very good Christians." [47]

To pursue these early casual references somewhat further, we find in the allegorical court plays of John Lyly but one direct allusion of this kind. This is in his last play, *The Woman in the Moon,* 1595, which is of a much more clearly satirical nature than any of its predecessors, as the author has by this time become disgruntled with the interminable delays of court and the forgotten royal promises. Here it is Pandora, the lady of discord, who declares:

> Thou madst me sullen first, and thou Jove, proud;
> Thou bloody minded, he a Puritan.[48]

But before we dismiss Lyly as one of the enemies of Puritans and Puritanism we must recall his active part in the Marprelate controversy, the popular plays connected with which have perished utterly. His meager and single use of the term "Puritan" would scarcely claim any notice could we restore those lost comedies which Lyly is believed to have written in derision of the Martin Marprelate incidents. *Pappe with an Hatchet,* a pamphlet, and *A Whip for an Ape* and *Mar-Martine,* two anti-Martinist rhymes, are assigned to his authorship and indicate just how adroitly he could lampoon his enemies. That Lyly took such an active part in this earliest clash between the dramatists and the Puritans is in entire accord with the fact that satire of the Puritans was not at this time a recognized sport of the dramatists. Moreover, this particular form of ridicule is utterly incongruous with the atmosphere of Lyly's allegorical plays.

Other incidental allusions to the Puritans are found here and there in plays written about 1600. One of these, *Jack Drum's Entertainment,* takes note of a well-known Puritan prejudice with: "Hush, hush, leave praying for dead, 'tis no good Calvinisme, Puri-

[47] *The Pedler's Prophecy,* ii, ll. 905-7.
[48] *The Woman in the Moon,* 5, 1.

tanisme." [49] This not unpleasant note is the only hint from the dramatists of the relation between English Puritanism and the teachings of the great French Protestant reformer. Hostis, in *Every Woman in Her Humour,* criticises her friend because "he had a fault in his humour, as none are without (but Puritans)." [50] *Sir Giles Goosecap* contains a fleeting reference to The Family of Love when Penelope charges Sir Cuthbert with being of this faith or none at all;[51] while the Host in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* laughs at the "swaggering Puritans, Knights of the Subsidy." [52] Marston will be found spurning the Puritans with few but effective thrusts. The "Malcontent", a character in his early play by that name, sets a standard for a certain kind of cleverness when he tells one who irritates him exceedingly that he would make "an excellent elder in a Deformed church." [53] In Dekker's early play, *Old Fortunatus,* itself rather moralistic in tone, you catch the phrase—"swearing like Puritans at one bare word." [54]

With the accession of King James the Puritans attained greater notoriety and incidental references to them increase proportionately. While the greatest variety of allusions as well as the greater number of lengthy satires come within the first fifteen years of the new century, the habit of making fun of the Puritans never ceased to be the fashion as long as the Elizabethan theatres remained open. Casual allusions arise from the most diverse circumstances, and sometimes there is a certain relation between the spirit in which they are made and the context in which they are found. In *Cupid's Whirligig,* a characteristic English adaptation of the merry Italian narrative,[55] the Puritan is spoken of with an appropriate tolerance. Slack, when asked of what religion he is, replies, "Faith I am yet clean paper, ye may write on me what ye will, either Puritant or Protestant." [56] The "Factor" in *News from the New World* boasts of his thousand and more letters a week and of the pleasure he has in his pen, and adds, "I have friends of all ranks and of all religions,

[49] P. 159.
[50] 4, 1.
[51] 2, 1.
[52] 1, 2.
[53] 4, 3.
[54] 1, 2.
[55] Boccaccio, *Decameron,* 7, 6.
[56] Cupid's Whirligig, 3, 1.

for which I keep an answering catalogue of dispatch; wherein I have my puritan news, my protestant news, and my pontifical news." [57] *Band, Cuff and Ruff* twice mentions the Puritans in a pleasant and even jesting manner. Cuff takes great delight in teasing Ruff about his grave demeanor and tells him he knows the Puritans will not greatly care for him because "he has such a deal of setting and they love standing better." Cuff further chides his companion for want of moderation; indeed he goes so far as to say that Ruff is a "horrible Puritan . . . and very precise." "Words and deeds are now more different than puritans and players," [58] need not be taken in a more disagreeable sense than John Cooke's mention of the word in his play, *Greene's TuQuoque,* where he says concerning a proud woman: "Her tongue is a perpetual motion; thought is not so swift as it is; and for pride, the woman that hath her ruff poked by the devil is but a puritan to her." [58a] Robert Armin, in his play *The Two Maids of More-clacke,* speaks most pleasantly of a "citizen . . . his canvas curran bags stuft with sweet sinnomon and cloves," and does not hesitate to add that he is "a puritan." [59]

These not unpleasant allusions call for a discussion of the equally pleasing and impartial allusions to the Puritans which are found in Shakespeare's plays. In his scenes there is almost every type of rogue and buffoon, but among them all no puritanical hypocrite or knave such as his fellow dramatists were then displaying upon the stage. The word 'Puritan' was in common use, particularly during the last decade of Shakespeare's connection with the theatre, yet it appears but seldom in his plays and then scarcely with offense. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Dekker and Middleton in particular, Shakespeare was not concerned with the realistic portrayal of special features or groups of his day. Rather, if only to once more emphasize what has so often been said, was he interested in those phases of Elizabethan life and character which have universal value and significance. However, the Puritans constituting such an important political and religious group in Elizabethan times, not even the master dramatist himself could utterly ignore them.

[57] Vol. 3, 135.
[58] The Hog Hath Lost His Pearl.
[58a] The story here alluded to is from Stubbe's *Anatomy of Abuses,* 1595. Dodsley, *Old English Plays,* 11, p. 192.
[59] London, 1609.

Malvolio is a study in character to whom Shakespeare gives several Puritan eccentricities. He feigns virtue, and Sir Toby may be expressing Shakespeare's dislike of that sort of preciseness and intolerance when he asks Malvolio: "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" [60] This is a very mild rebuke, and although Maria characterizes him in this same scene as a "kind of Puritan" and takes note of his infinite conceit and pompous speech-characteristics, faults which other and lesser dramatists were constantly attributing to Puritans, one is compelled to conclude with Maria that "the devil a puritan that he is, or anything but a time-pleaser." At any rate, Malvolio with his rantings and struttings is not like those 'still' people, possibly the Puritans, whom that delightful rogue Gratiano singles out:

> There are a sort of men whose visages
> Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
> And do a wilful stillness entertain,
> With purpose to be dres't in an opinion
> Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit.[61]

Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night* comes the nearest to real satire when it is suggested that he use 'policy' and he hurls back the reply: "I had as lief be a Brownist as a politician." [62]

A slightly unsavory reference is found in *Pericles*. The bawd, believing a puritanical zeal actuates Marianna's steadfast attitude, mentions "her quirks, her reasons, her master reasons, her prayers, her knees," and later adds that "she would make a puritan of the devil if he should cheapen a kiss of her." [63]

Sir Oliver Martext is of that considerable company including Ananias, Dullpate and Rabbi Busy—to mention but three—whose very names were expressive of the distaste felt for their group. He appears for a moment in *As You Like It* because he has promised to "couple" Touchstone and Audrey. In this village vicar Shakespeare may possibly be satirizing the ignorant portion of the Puritan clergy, for Jacques objects to Martext performing the ceremony, advising Touchstone to have a "good" priest tell him "what marriage is" for "this fellow will but join you together as they join

[60] *Twelfth Night*, 2, 3.
[61] *Merchant of Venice*, 1, 1.
[62] 3, 2.
[63] 4, 6.

wainscot: then one of you will prove a shrunk panel, and like green timber warp, warp." [64] Later, Touchstone refers to this vicar as "a most vile Martext." [65]

Puritan and Papist are the basis for the illustration drawn by Shakespeare in *All's Well That Ends Well.* The clown observes that "if men could be content to be what they are, there were no fear in marriage, for young Charbon the puritan and old Poysam the papist howsome'er their hearts are severed in religion, their heads are one: they may jowl horns together like any deer i' the herd." A little later the clown adds: "Though honesty be no puritan, yet it will do no hurt, it will sear the surplice of humanity over the black gown of a big heart." [66] Here there is no sneer for those who have their prejudices but rather does their well-known aversion provide a figure for the expression of a noble thought and appreciation of an understanding spirit. This is to be matched only by the pleasant allusion of another clown in *The Winter's Tale.* Speaking of the shearers who are singing at the sheep-shearing feast, he says: "They are most of them means and bases; but one puritan among them and he sings songs to hornpipes." [67]

Shakespeare may have been loathe to satirize the Puritans, but scarcely for reasons of policy or consistency, as Fleay's far-fetched parallels regarding the characters of *Love's Labour's Lost* would indicate.[68] There is of course his oft-noted reluctance to ridicule the Lollard martyr Sir John Oldcastle.[69] Whatever the reason, unwillingness or disinterestedness, it is significant that the few references to Puritans are of such a casual and incidental nature that they may all be considered in this chapter dealing with allusions. Shakespeare's magnanimity, tolerance and sympathetic nature are nowhere more clearly and convincingly shown than in his dealing thus sparingly and kindly with one of the most significant but most maligned groups of his time.

On the whole, casual allusions to the Puritans do not differ from the tone of the great body of satire directed against them and we

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[64] 3, 3.
[65] 5, 1.
[66] 1, 3.
[67] 4, 2.
[68] See Fleay, "Anglia," vii, p. 223.
[69] Epilogue, *Henry the Fourth,* part 2.

find that the bitter, sneering and insulting remarks are in excess of those which merely mention the Puritans or fling a jest at their queer, precise ways. Of these, there are the rather casual jabs which turn out to be more complimentary than their authors intended. The master in Massinger's *The Renegado* injures the precise people not at all when he winks at doubtful practices with the comment that he is not "so precise" but that he too can indulge.[70] Just so, one hardened scoffer, rather than be known as "heretic or Puritan," prefers to pass as one, who, in addition to far more disreputable practices, will "eat fish all Lent, and fast Fridays, with cakes and wine, fruit and spicery; shrive me of my old sins before Easter and begin new before Whitsuntide." [71] Similar to these is the unintended compliment in the allusion by the villain in *The Dumb Knight* when he seeks to poison the heart of King Cyrus against his queen by drawing this effective contrast:

> Before your face she's like a puritan:
> Behind your back a blushless courtesan.[72]

Dekker is to have much to say regarding the Puritans and the chance allusions in both his early and later plays are indicative of the blended humour and disparagement which characterize his lengthier satires. One play in which the devil figures rather prominently expresses the fear that this evil one is himself turned Puritan, "since he hates to hear his own child swear." [73] Apropos of this we find phrases such as "the devil turn'd precisian" [74] and "the devil in the shape of a Puritan",[75] and similar scurrilous comparisons which will be noted in other connections. In *The Honest Whore* Bellefront orders an "ungodly puritanical creature" out of her sight,[76] and Sweep, in scorn of the Puritan whom Dekker has made one of the madmen, exclaims—"a puritan, there is no hope of him, unless he may pull down the steeple and hang himself in the bell rope." [77] "Thou Puritan fool" and "puritan-paleness" [78] are expressive terms

[70] 1, 3.
[71] *Sir John Oldcastle,* 4, 2.
[72] 3, 1.
[73] *If This be not a Good Play, the Devil is in it,* vol. 3, p. 16.
[74] *A New Way to Pay Old Debts,* 1, 1.
[75] *Ibid.,* 2, 2.
[76] Part 1, 2, 1.
[77] *Ibid.,* 5, 2.
[78] 5, 1.

found in *The Witch of Edmonton,* written by Dekker and others. *Westward Ho,* which Dekker wrote in collaboration with Webster, belittles the Puritans, though perhaps more gently. In the first scene Honisuckle facetiously remarks: "Yes, believe it, and we shall have the finest schoolmaster, a kind of Precisian, and yet an honest knave, too;" while in the first scene of the third act Ambush includes "Puritan" in the familiar list of "Banquerots, Brokers, Fencers and Sergeants." A somewhat similar listing is given by G. Wilkins in *Miseries of Enforced Marriage.* In answer to the question as to whether there are "any Christians in the world," one of the characters lists them with "Jews, brokers, puritans and sergeants."[79] In the last scene of *Eastward Ho* is found still another and more interesting grouping: "Papist, Protestant, Puritan, Brownist, Anabaptist, Millinery, Family of Love, Jew, Turk, Infidel, Atheist, Good-fellow." A passage from Davenant's *New Trick to Cheat the Devil* illustrates even more clearly how the Puritans at this time were associated in the common mind with other despised groups. The Jew and the Puritan are here treated as identical, the fifth Antic saying:

> I am a Puritan? One that will eat no pork,
> Doth use to shut his shop on Saturdays,
> And open them on Sundays; a Familist
> And one of the arch limbs of Belzebub
> A Jewish Christian and a Christian Jew.[80]

Middleton never speaks of the Puritans but to disparage or affront them. In one of his early plays he mentions that sect which proper Puritans so hotly repudiated and which he soon afterwards helped to make so infamous. True to type, the jest concerns a woman, one who because she labours so earnestly is compared to "a good wholesome sister of the Family."[81] So often in these allusions and in the longer satires Middleton makes the despised Puritan or some trait of his the basis for a derogatory comparison or illustration. In one of the most ribald of his comedies an innocent enough remark is thus mocked:

> Most virtuously deliver'd
> Spoke like the sister of a puritan midwife.[82]

[79] Dodsley, 9, p. 470.
[80] 4, 1.
[81] *A Mad World My Masters,* 2, 2.
[82] *More Dissemblers Besides Women,* 2, 3.

A light and clever thrust at those whom Middleton constantly misrepresented as hypocrites appears in the dialogue between Frippery and Novice, characters in *Your Five Gallants.* Novice is asked whether he can carry himself "cunningly and seem holy" and answers, "O fear not that, sir, my friends were all Puritans." [83] In *Anything for a Quiet Life* Middleton is not quite so ungracious. He takes passing notice of the Puritans, "especially your puritans in Scotland" who are unable to endure a certain person who blows the organ in the court chapel; and he also draws the conclusion that a certain woman who denies her husband the supremacy is not "of the sect." [84] Two particularly caustic lines are found in Middleton and Rowley's *The World Tost at Tennis.* Whitestarch says:

> Know I'm Starch Protestant, thou starch Puritan
> With the blue nostril, whose tongue lies i' thy nose.[85]

Other dramatists spoke no less repugnantly. Chapman's weaver had a nose with a narrow bridge, "according to the Puritanic cut," [86] and still another sectary was "a man of upright calf and clean nostrils." [87]

Frequently characters who would repent are dubbed 'Puritans,' the word being intended to carry the double meaning of piety and hypocrisy. Thus Marston caricatures Isabella when she denounces her former sins. The maid sneers at her mistress preaching "in her pulpit" and Massino declares that he "always took her for a puritan and now she shows it." [88] After a similar manner a daughter sneers at her father's seeming innocence with "Why, how now, Student, grand Magitian, Puritan?" [89] In this same play by John Day another character bitterly remarks that to be chaste and poor is "as singular and rare as conscience with an Anabaptist." [90]

The later dramatists continued sporadically the habit of satirizing the Puritans, and when the troublous times of King Charles intensified the quarrel between the Puritans and the stage a new crop of allusions and bitter diatribes appeared in the drama. We read of one young woman who in scorn of her suitor and to show him how

[83] 1, 2.
[84] 5, 1.
[85] Vol. 7, p. 169.
[86] *Monsieur D'Olive,* 2, 1.
[87] *A Christian Turned Turk;* Act. 4.
[88] *The Insatiate Countess,* 3, 4.
[89] *Law Tricks,* Act 5.
[90] Act 2.

badly she would use him declares that though he were a Puritan and she did command him to wait her to a play he might not question it.[91] Rampino, one of Davenant's characters in *The Unfortunate Lovers,* speaks of preaching to "certain car-men" who "are gone swearing and well edified."[92] Thomas Nabbes detested the Puritans for their eccentricities and censoriousness and found many occasions to sneer at them. Lent, a character in his masque *Spring's Glory,* points to two good fellows who "would get a better race under a hedge to people New England, than the Separatists that possess it."[93] He tells of Crop eating his meat, even on Good Friday, and being without ears, which, if he had, "he might make a very good Puritan horse."[94] Killigrew, in 1635, refers to a contemporary ballad on "Crop the Brownist,"[95] and Davenant mentions "Brownist" in connection with "amorous,"[96] but strangely enough, in this instance, the sneer concerns the Brownists' lack of an amorous nature. Likewise, Brome does not doubt that a villain is "crop-ear'd," the recent cropping of Prynne's ears being the reference in point.[97] Brome, like Nabbes, takes a delight in twitting the "giddy-brained Puritans," as he calls them. He tells of a "Precisian who ends all his epistles with amen," and of an old man who went into the service of the Bishop, "but learned not to be a Puritan there."[98] Shirley in his play *A Lady of Pleasure* has an interesting cross reference to another of his plays, *The Ball,* to which ball Bornwell bids his guests repair as to the court of pleasure, adding, "'Tis the Family of Love translated into more costly sin."[99] In his last play, *The Cardinal,* which appeared just before the closing of the theatres, Shirley voices his resentment against these "short-haired men" who "do crowd and call for justice."[100]

This concludes what is a mere scratching of the surface of this wide subject, but the variety and the pointedness of the allusions have

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[91] *The Antiquary,* Act. 2.
[92] 2, 1.
[93] Bullen, 2, p. 234.
[94] *Covent Garden,* 1, 2.
[95] *The Parson's Wedding,* 3, 5.
[96] *Love and Honour,* 3, 1.
[97] *The Damoiselle,* 2, 1.
[98] *Ibid.,* 3, 1.
[99] 1, 1.
[100] 2, 3.

served to show how familiar to Elizabethan audiences was the Puritan, and how the use of his name or the mention of some trait of his provides apt comparisons and illumines certain topics. Almost nothing has been said of Jonson, and but little of Chapman, Middleton, Randolph and many others—all of whom lavished their jests and their ridicule upon the sectaries. But their many brief allusions are so unfailingly linked with some Puritan prejudice or eccentricity or are so integral a part of the scenes or plays which are devoted to this form of satire that they can be more effectively connected with those discussions dealing with the Puritan himself and with his beliefs and prejudices.

CHAPTER TWO

The matter of ritual and observance occasioned the first controversies in the Established Church, and is of importance to this study because the aversion of the Puritans to ceremonies and the characteristics, even the peculiarities which they developed largely as a result of their constant altercations and persecutions, determined the nature of the attack to be made upon them by the dramatists. Earnest reformers were insistent upon a simplicity of worship and living for which they went to the Scriptures for authority. They believed it necessary to put away everything which, to them, stood between man and God; to abjure needless ceremonies and worship God in spirit and truth. The unknown author of *New Custom,* seeking to expose the abuses of the old faith, and to justify the new, lists some of the outstanding points of controversy which in these first years of Elizabeth's reign are seen to be well defined. Here we find Ignorance, symbol of the old order, complaining about the preacher who teaches:

> All our doings are naught, and have been many a day.
> He disalloweth our ceremonies and rites and teacheth another way
> To serve God, than that which we do use,
> And goeth about the people's mind to seduce.
> It is a pestilent knave, he will have priests no corner-cap to wear;
> Surplices are superstition; beads, paxes, and such other gear,
> With censing and singing, he accounts not worth three half-pence, . .
> But he commands the service in English to be read.[101]

Perverse Doctrine condemns a minister who "began to revile at the holy communion and transubstantiation;" censures those who wish to make use of all Scripture, "either the whole Bible or the New Testament"; and reveals the abhorrence which the conservative element of the Church felt for those who dared to "meddle in divinity."[102]

Here we see that much as these believers in the old order are disturbed by the reforms they witness all about them they feel a

[101] *New Custom,* 1, 1.
[102] *Ibid.,* 1, 1.

still deeper anger over the daring of the movement itself. That a young man with no authority should have the audacity to think for himself and, moreover, attempt to influence others, was past all understanding. When the dramatists of 1590 and after satirized the Puritans there remained not a hint of this old conflict regarding the original claims of the Protestants. Puritan doctrine is not a subject for debate in Elizabethan plays. The Puritan is a character whose attributes have been determined by the doctrinal factions of an earlier generation, a person not very interesting because of his beliefs as such but conspicuous for the peculiarities with which these convictions marked him and for the restraints which they led him to impose upon others.

The ritual of the Established Church retaining as it did many of the prayers and forms of the Papal service was regarded by part of the clergy and by many of the people as a relic which tended to keep alive the old faith and possibly to prepare for its future restoration. The Queen's partiality for the Romish forms was always a source of uneasiness. She was said to believe in transubstantiation and to have read prayers to the Virgin. The crucifix and lighted tapers were used in her own chapel and she opposed the marriage of the clergy. "Her majesty was afraid of reforming too far; she was desirous to retain images in churches, crucifixes and crosses, vocal and instrumental music, with all the old Popish garments." [103] Neal further states that only by the use of English instead of Latin could the services in her own and other chapels be distinguished from those of the Roman church.[104] Dissatisfied spirits, finding no friendliness in Church or State, turned for authority to the Scriptures, where they found nothing to justify the enforcement of the ceremonies. Furthermore, they felt that for the civil authorities to force their observance was a violation of the right of conscience.

Before 1565 several requests and petitions were presented to the Queen and the House of Commons seeking an abatement of the most obnoxious rites and the substitution of inoffensive forms. It was desired that the Psalms might be sung distinctly by the whole congregation and that organs might be laid aside, that none but ministers should baptise and they should not use the sign of the cross in

[103] Neal, 1, p. 96.
[104] 1, p. 108.

baptism. At the ministration of communion the posture of kneeling was to be left indifferent. The use of copes and surplices was to be taken away, "so that all ministers in their ministry use a grave, comely, and sad garment, as they commonly do in preaching." [105] All Sundays in the year and the principal feasts of Christ were to be kept holidays, but all saints' days, festivals, and holidays bearing the name of a creature were to be abrogated.

The peculiar aversion felt for the 'habits' symbolized the strength of the Puritan's hatred of Papal authority. In accounts and histories of the Puritans more space is given to this matter than to any other single item of controversy. Upon the Queen's ruling against further simplicity in ceremonials, debates raged in the churches, and between the bodies of non-conformists in England and abroad, as to what policy should be followed. Some of the clergy continued to wear the habits in accord with the civil ruling, others laid them aside, while square caps, round caps, and hats were worn according to inclination. To the more reasonable the habits were a matter of indifference. The moderate Puritan took the stand that eventually the habits should be laid aside by authority and that until this was accomplished they should not be forced upon those who scrupled them. Jonson's Parson Palate was one of those who successfully straddled this issue. Compass assures his companion that Palate is their parish pope, even though he is seen "without his coat," and the man is truly no Puritan, but, as the playwright describes him, "a fine well-furnished and apparelled divine." [106] But to the more radical of the non-conformists surplice, corner-cap and tippet were offensive devices which savoured of idolatry. Resistance was not always passive, feeling running so high that ministers who continued to wear the garments were frequently not saluted on the streets and were even subjected to gross indignities.

All these disputes must have seemed vain and trifling to those who took no part in them, and not only insignificant but also amusing to the dramatists, who, as a group, were entirely uninterested in the religious aspect but always ready to satirize the eccentric Puritan. The author of *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* no doubt enjoyed having Stupido boast of his exemplary old uncle who "never wore cap nor

[105] Neal, 1, p. 121.
[106] *The Magnetic Lady,* 1, 1.

surplice in his life. . . . nor any such popish ornament." [107] Elizabethans were so familiar with this scruple that a clown could illustrate his point with "H' has turned his stomach, for all the world like a Puritan's at the sight of a surplice." [108] Shakespeare assumes the same understanding in his more involved figure of speech including the idea of the surplice,[109] although here the clown's allusion is without either humour or hint of sarcasm.

Puritans were wont to shy at the whiteness of the habits, probably because of the pomp and pride of ceremony which the gleaming white robes recalled or because of their desire to crush all vanity by wearing gloomy garments. At least one dramatist, Edward Sharpman, went a step farther in assigning a reason for the Puritan's hatred of the surplice. He permits Mistress Correction to speak of the surplice as similar to the apparel of an immodest woman, giving that as the reason "your sincere puritans, cannot abide to wear a surplice." [110]

Increasing bitterness between Puritan and Cavalier factions during the last decade of this period seems to have stimulated the later dramatists to revive some of the better known and more ridiculous scruples of the early Puritans and to give them, if possible, a still more malicious twist. We read of "digesting the wearing of a surplice" and of two officers, the one an arch-Brownist, the other a Sergeant who cannot endure to see a surplice worn.[111] *The City Match* recalls the old aversion to white robes. Aurelia's innocent question as to whether clean linen may be heresy draws from her fanatical maid the vehement reply: "Surely, yes, clean linen in a surplice." [112] Most expressive of all is Marmion's metaphor of the man in a surplice, who was thought to be the "ghost of heresy." [113] Randolph alludes to this scruple several times but always in a casual, jesting tone. Mistress Flowerdew gives the Puritans' real reason for the aversion when she says she is willing to have the penurious Micropopes use a porter's frock for a surplice because it is "not so

[107] Act 3.
[108] *A Match at Midnight*, 1, 1.
[109] *All's Well That Ends Well*, 1, 3.
[110] *Cupid's Whirligig*, 2, 1.
[111] *The Knave in Grain*, Act 1.
[112] 2, 1.
[113] *A Fine Companion*, 5, 2.

ceremonious." [114] Dull-pate is not too stupid to know that he had best seek preferment when garbed in raiment suitable to a parson. His superior is duly impressed, as his comment shows:

> He looks so learnedly, and goes in black, too—
> He may change habits, 'tis allow'd of now,
> As the world goes.[115]

Later, when this dull parson is officiating in his new office, he instructs an old woman to "fetch the quire in for sacrifice (but bid them bring no copes nor organs with them)." [116] Dullpate's scruples are matters of policy, but Ananias Goggle speaks with true conviction against the "profane cope or the Levitical smock" and further says:

> Cloaks are for saints; they preach in cloaks all now;
> Gowns are all popes.[117]

Thomas Jordan also brings back some of the phrases and fanaticisms of early dissenters. A white Knight in his lawn sleeves evokes the comment that "if a Quaker saw him he would take his shirt for a surplice, and condemn it for a Babylonish garment, or in good sooth and verily a wicked and superstitious remnant of that foul flaps the whore of Babylon." [118]

Sconce and Urinal, two of Glapthorne's old crones, delight in telling yarns about "the brethren." One tale in particular derives its fun from scruples of the sect. Contrary to most references to Puritans in this last decade, there is no ill humour to cloud its sparkle; not even a lament that the hanging was escaped. So admirable an example of the short story is it that it bears quotation.

Urinal: There was a Puritan, Mr. Sconce, who, cause he saw a Surplice, in the church, would needs hang himself in the Bell-ropes.

Sconce: Why did not the sexton ring him by the ears for it?

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[114] *The Muse's Looking Glass,* 3, 1.
[115] *Hey for Honesty,* 1, 3.
[116] *Ibid.,* 5, 1.
[117] *Hey for Honesty,* 4, 1.
[118] *The Walks of Islington and Hogsdon,* 4, 1—dated 1641. This is probably the first reference in drama to this new sect of Dissenters, the Quakers. See E. K. Maxfield, "The Quakers in English Plays before 1800." P. M. L. A. 45, 259, where *The Country Innocence, or The Chambermaid Turned Quaker,* dated 1647, is noted as the first play to recognize this Society by name.

Urinal: Him my Mr. seeing, did for experience sake anoint the noose wherein his neck had been, and it recovered him.
Sconce: Is it possible he should so easily escape a hanging![119]

To the Puritan the symbol of the cross, not only in the church ceremonies but everywhere, came to be considered idolatrous. Mistress Flowerdew can speak no greater scorn of a stage character than that "she looketh like the idol of Cheapside."[120] Since no personal caricature was involved in this scruple no scurrilous use is made of it by the dramatists. Randolph sees it as an occasion for humour when the disgruntled Lemot is distributing prizes. To Florilla, whom he has not been able to tempt, he gives a pair of holy beads with a crucifix, a gift she promptly scorns, saying: "O bommination idole, Ile none of them."[121] So does Ananias Goggle, the more famous Puritan of a later play, bluntly state that "crosses are Romish idols."[122] Even Gabriel is "at defiance" with a little cross which he spies upon a church,[123] and a boy in one of Day's comedies says that "great personages humours are puritans, they'll as lief endure the devil as soon as a cross; and can away with him better."[124]

Nonconformists were consistent in their effort to make the rite of baptism a simple one, emphasizing its power to cleanse from sin rather than its ceremonial value. Accordingly, they objected to the sign of the cross in baptism and they deplored the practice of having godfathers or godmothers at these rites. Conformists were no whit more sparing in their condemnation of the Puritans for their failure to observe the formalities. Oath calls his Puritan companions "half-christen'd catamites, ungodmother'd varlets."[125] Conversely, a roguish captain who attempts the disguise of a parson piously asserts that godfathers are "absurd and superstitious," and he asks: "Are we not all brothers and sisters, and as much akin in that as godfathers and

[119] *The Hollander*, 2, 1.
[120] *The Muse's Looking Glass*, 5, 1. This was one of several crosses to be found in London. Held in great reverence by the Papists these crosses were therefore objects of outrage to the Puritans. When they came into power one of their first orders was for the removal and destruction of these offensive crosses.
[121] Vol. 1, p. 106.
[122] *Hey for Honesty*, 4, 1.
[123] *Covent Garden Weeded*, 2, 2.
[124] *Humour Out of Breath*, 4, 1.
[125] *The Puritan*, 1, 3.

god-daughters?" [126] Jonson can always be depended upon to tear the sham from the real, and in this matter he implies that the Puritan balked at the name rather than at the practice itself. Littlewit relates how that most scrupulous of Puritans, Busy, was once a "witness" for Win when he could not be a godfather.[127] Recognizing the same prejudice, Compass invites his ladyship to be a "witness" at a christening.[128] In Randolph's play, Nevergood is so disgusted with Goggle's frenzies that he declares, among many other things:

> . . . yet I shall live
> To see my little Anabaptist come
> To his twelve godfathers.[129]

The prejudice is again noted in *The Devil's Law Case,* but in circumstances scarcely to the discredit of the "arch-puritan." [130]

By some Puritans the posture of kneeling was abhorred, more because of its association with that custom in the Roman Church than for any positive reason. The dramatists take scant notice of this scruple. In one instance a boy prays his godfather for a blessing and is jokingly told that he is no Brownist since he can kneel to his godfather for a gift.[131] A young reveler tries to persuade his precise companion that in devotion the ungodly go beyond him, since he will not kneel to a ghostly father as they will do to a carnal mistress.[132]

Other signs and symbols were despised and rooted out wherever found by zealous Puritans. The undoing of Busy which sent him to the stocks came about by his interference with a gingerbread woman whose basket of figures, made in the shapes of the saints, he overthrew because he considered it a "basket of popery," a "nest of images." [133] Best of all is Mistress Chremylus' plaintive recital of her experiences with some assertive sectaries: "I'll be sworn, this morning, the lay clergy, while they were preaching at Bell Alley and Coleman Street, I came by with my basket; the hungry rascals in pure zeal had like to eat my gingerbread, had there not been

[126] *The Silent Woman,* 5, 1.
[127] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[128] *The Magnetic Lady,* 4, 1.
[129] *Hey for Honesty,* 4, 1.
[130] 4, 1.
[131] *The Walks of Islington and Hogsdon,* 3, 3.
[132] *Covent Garden Weeded,* 4, 2.
[133] *Bartholomew Fair,* 3, 1.

Popish pictures upon it. I had much ado to keep them from scrambling my apples too, had not the nets of my old ruff looked like so many organ pipes, and frightened them." [134]

Organs were indeed put under the ban by these early Puritans. They were too majestic for the plain services of the dissenters, and probably recalled too clearly the solemnity of the great cathedral services. Stupido speaks of the vanity of a pair of organs,[135] and Bird, listening to Banassus tell how he will build a cathedral church with a pair of stately organs, scorns the instruments as "Babylonian bagpipes." [136] Even the bells and steeples were obnoxious to this inordinate zealot who rails against the "wicked synagogues, where those instruments of superstition and idolatry ring warning to sin, and chime all in-to the devil." [137] Tribulation implies that bell-founders are anti-Christian,[138] and Parson Dull twits the Pope about Rome's loss of certain ones who have had their consciences freed from the paying of tithes—an anti-Christian custom like that of having steeple houses.[139] Unaccompanied singing seems to have been the only music permitted and the quality of this—according to the dramatists—was deplorable. "Suck up your ha! and hum in a tune," is Jonson's description. Subtle sneers at the tune which calls the flock together, granting that it may be useful to "women and other phlegmatic people." "It is your bell," he says to Ananias, but that staunch Puritan flatly replies, "Bells are profane, a tune may be religious." [140] Middleton, who constantly exhibits the Puritans as ignorant, flighty creatures, pictures Mistress Purge as horrified at the very mention of organs, railing at their "abominable squeaking sound" and hoping that her body has no organs.[141] We read of another Puritan who was "out of love with his own members, because they were called organs." [142]

Randolph jests about a similar form of ignorance and misdirected zeal. Bird confuses the word "masque" with "mass", from which

[134] *Hey for Honesty,* 3, 3.
[135] *Pilgrimage to Parnassus,* Act. 3.
[136] *The Muse's Looking Glass,* 3, 1.
[137] *Ibid.,* 3, 1.
[138] *Alchemist,* 3, 1.
[139] *Hey for Honesty,* 5, 1.
[140] *Alchemist,* 3, 2.
[141] *The Family of Love,* 3, 3.
[142] *A Fine Companion,* 5, 2.

vile idolatry he and his companion must flee.[143] Later, when Roscius the player announces "several virtues," Bird hopes there will be no cardinal virtues for he hates a "virtue that will be made a cardinal." Pope-virtues are impious and bishop-virtues unwarrantable, but he will permit deacon-virtues or even elder-virtues, providing they be lay-virtues.[144] Marmion carries this form of burlesque a step farther and draws some astounding conclusions about the Puritan who "held very strange positions, for he counted Fathers to be as unlawful in the church, as Plato did poets in his commonwealth." [145]

Likewise the word "Christmas" was associated with the celebration of the Mass, which to a Puritan was the very symbol of idolatry. Ananias quarrels with the term, correcting it to "Christ-tide." [146] Puritans objected to Christmas not only as a term and because it was observed by special rites in the Roman Church, but they disliked the festivities and gayety which had come to be associated with the day.[147] Goggle, the arch-puritan of Randolph's play will not endure Never-good to mention a "Christmas pie," but will permit the term "Nativity pie." The superstitious name of Christmas, he says, "is banished out of all England, holly and ivy too." [148] Many years before this Randolph's great teacher had shown his intimate knowledge of these scrupulous folk by carefully avoiding the term so hateful to them, using "Nativity pie" instead.[149]

The Elizabethan Puritan's detestation of all things mindful of Rome, particularly the abstract idea of Rome's power, with the more concrete image of the Pope, can scarcely be overestimated. To him the very name "pope" was anathema, as Shirley so humourously notes in *The Bird in a Cage*.[150] For the words 'bishop' or 'prelate' he had scarcely more use, but he took great satisfaction in his own more apostolic terms, such as elder, prophet, preacher, minister or deacon. At the time of King James' accession the horrors of Queen

[143] *Muse's Looking Glass,* 1, 4.
[144] *Ibid.,* 5, 1.
[145] *A Fine Companion,* 5, 2.
[146] *The Alchemist,* 3, 2.
[147] When we recall that the Pilgrim fathers were so opposed to making any festival of Christmas that they sent their children to school and continued their own labors on that day we may realize how deeply rooted was the prejudice.
[148] *Hey for Honesty,* 4, 1.
[149] *Volpone,* 1. 1.
[150] 4, 1.

Mary's reign were well remembered by some and upon the younger generation the circulation of such books as Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* had exerted a mighty influence, so that many Protestants who would have been apathetic so far as any aggressive faith of their own was concerned were yet actively united in a hatred and horror of the Pope and the Roman Church. The will of Thomas Cartwright, who died in 1603, directs that his body be buried "without pomp and superstition used in the Popish Synagogues in times past." [151] Shakespeare's English King expresses defiance against Rome and the confidence that it will never again rule England.

> Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name
> So slight, unworthy, and ridiculous,
> To charge me to an answer, as the Pope.
> Tell him this tale, and from the mouth of England
> Add thus much more: that no Italian priest
> Shall tithe or toll in our dominions.[152]

Most dramatists, however, were more wont to poke fun at the Puritan for the intensity of his hatred against Rome and for the coarse manner in which he expressed himself. The Roman Church was called the "Whore of Babylon," just as very wicked things were regarded as "of Babylon." "Rag of Rome";[153] "Rags of Christianity";[154] "Popish tribe"; "popish Bishops"; "Popish pillory", and "Romish Carcass" [155] are some of the indelicate phrases attributed to the zealots. The author of *Covent Garden Weeded* shows up the absurdity of the intoxicated Gabriel claiming the "over-much abuse of these outlandish liquors, have bred so many errors in the Romish Church." [156] Chapman's weaver, though sober, rants with a greater violence and an equal lack of clarity about the superstitions and evils of Rome;[157] while Jonson's merchant is a better observer, and less prejudiced, for he implies that both precise and rigid Roman Catholics were strict in their habits.[158]

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[151] Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism*, Appendix, xxxviii.
[152] *King John*, 3, 1.
[153] *Alchemist*, 3, 1.
[154] *Family of Love*, 4, 1.
[155] *Hey for Honesty*, 4, 1.
[156] 4, 2.
[157] *Monsieur D'Olive*, 2, 1.
[158] *Every Man In His Humour*, 3, 2.

Back of all this particular form of satire is the implication that the undue prejudice of the Puritan is the result of his ignorance. This it is which causes Ananias to be suspicious of traditions, because to him they are associated with Popish things.[159] The bogey of the Pope is part of the interest which some Puritan characters have in a letter from one of their continental brethren. They agree to pay nine pence if Thomas will read this news from Constantinople:

> **They give out here, the grand signior**
> **Is certainly turned Christian; and to clear**
> **The controversy 'twixt the pope and him,**
> **Which is the Antichrist, he means to visit**
> **The church at Amsterdam this very summer,**
> **And quit all marks of the beast.**[160]

Hey for Honesty ridicules the Papal party with a vigor equal to that which this same play expends upon the Dissenters. In the concluding scene the Pope is brought upon the stage and treated with an even greater insolence than that accorded Goggle. No Puritan was ever depicted as a more gluttonous, acquisitive, hypocritical creature. Randolph exposes his vices with a candor and vindictiveness to be envied by the most rancorous Puritan, yet he closes the scene with a jest at the Roundheads who "will not come, 'cause the Pope's here." [161] This same matter, put in slightly different form, could easily have been the diatribe of a zealous brother, evidence that the Puritan was only one part of a great body of Englishmen holding these prejudices against Rome.

The Puritan's insistence upon the use of English in the services of the church was only a step in advance of the early Protestant emphasis upon the right of every man to read the entire Bible in his own language. The Latin service was held to be a barrier between man and God because it could not be understood by the common people. So numerous did the sects become that it would have been impossible for even their ministers to have had the requisite training in Latin. Furthermore, Latin was associated with the renounced formality of the Roman Church. The demand of Queen Elizabeth that Latin be used in certain ceremonies of the Church

[159] *Alchemist,* 3, 2.
[160] *Staple of News,* 3, 1.
[161] 5, 1.

brought the equally firm determination on the part of the Dissenters that they would have none of it. Eventually, the very mention of Latin came to be a signal for verbal battle to the extreme sectary, and so the scruple became a stock subject of ridicule for the dramatists. *The Return from Parnassus* makes no effort to satirize the Puritans as does its companion of the Parnassus group, but Immertio, though no such canting Puritan as Stupido, reveals his narrowness by stating that "there are certain questions I make scruple to be posed in"; which scruples Academico explains: "He means any question in Latin, which he counts a scruple; O this honest man could never abide this popish tongue of Latin. O he is as true an Englishman as lives." [162] In one of Middleton's plays we see the bewildered parents of a Cambridge son who has made a copious use of Latin in his letters to them. Unable to translate it, they cannot go to the parson in their difficulty because he "calls Latin papistry," and "will not deal with it." [163]

Jonson delights in the clever use of this prejudice. In *The Magnetic Lady* when the parson and Bias banter each other with Latin phrases it is more lack of understanding than Puritanical aversion which prompts Mistress Polish to exclaim, "All errant learned men, how they 'spute Latin." [164] Busy leaves no doubt as to his attitude toward Latin. There is an amusing moment when Overdue, who, with Busy having been consigned to the stocks, aims to hold his spirit above "these contumelies" by quoting Latin, only to be notified by his pious neighbour that there will be no more conversation between them if he must listen to more of "those superstitious relics, those lists of Latin, the very rags of Rome, and patches of Popery." [165] In *The Alchemist* some good fun is derived from Ananias' constant objection to the "heathen Greek," which he ignorantly supposes his fellow rogues are using in their conversation about alchemy. He insists that "all's heathen but the Hebrew." [166] Here there is double humour, the hypocrite in the midst of villainy seriously concerned about a religious scruple, in itself a ridiculous one, possible only to an unlearned man. Certain unlettered dissenters seem to have had

[162] 2, 4.
[163] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, 1, 1.
[164] 3, 4.
[165] *Bartholomew Fair*, 4, 1.
[166] 2, 1.

a predilection for the Hebrew of the Old Testament and an abhorrence for the Greek of the New.[167] Jonson was not only within the bounds of truth but he was more than justified in exposing this stupid prejudice.

In his *Introduction* to *Hey for Honesty* Randolph good-humouredly takes notice of the Puritan's squeamishness about the classical languages. Incidentally we gain an estimate of what the Puritan strength was a decade before it actually triumphed. The translator rebukes him for an ass if he thinks he can come to London to speak Hebrew-Greek. "Why," he says, "three-quarters of the city are Roundheads, man, that of all the languages of Babylon think it a heresy to understand any but their native English. The schools of Latin and Greek have a long vacation; if thou wilt please 'em, thou must needs speak English." [168] In one scene of this play two vacillating parsons and some rustics carry on a conversation which shows that the trend of the ministers was away from the old forms, but that for the sake of their livings they were willing to subscribe to what was familiar to and desired by their followers. Dicaeus, the rich parson is willing to 'be one of the Assembly, and walk demurely in a long black coat at Westminster, forgetting all his Latin and Greek,' while Clip-Latin expresses pride in his name and in his ability to 'read a homily and pray by the service-book divinely.' [169] When the rustics object, declaring that they cannot follow this new sect in their "extrumperies" Clip-Latin and Dicaeus hastily change their tune in favor of "the King and the Prayer-Book." [170]

However absurd the Puritan seems to be in this matter, it is extremely improbable that any save the most unlearned men were so ridiculously adverse to the Latin and Greek languages in themselves as the several incidents in these plays would seem to indicate. Some fanatics may have thought it possible and expedient to legislate a dead language out of existence. These provided good material for the dramatist. But the average Puritan objected only to the Latin service of the church, though he no doubt became more vehement in his protests when the rulers and bishops sought to make it compulsory.

[167] A discussion of this matter, together with examples from other periods, is found in Cunningham's edition of *The Works of Ben Jonson,* vol. 2, p. 33.
[168] Vol. 2, p. 380.
[169] *Hey for Honesty, 2, 6.*
[170] *Ibid.*

Fasting days met with disapproval because of their origin in the Roman Church and because they were often observed in a frivolous, worldly manner. The Puritan could find no Scriptural authority for these days and so considered them wrong, since the influence of man rather than the command of the Gospel was responsible for designating them. He felt that a spirit of idolatry entered into the worship and festivities of "creature-holidays." Neal tells of a certain non-conformist chaplain who went so far as to say that keeping the Queen's birthday as a holiday was equivalent to making an idol of her—thereby bringing about his arrest and long imprisonment.[171]

Abstaining from flesh on Friday and during Lent was the most common observance and therefore the one most despised by the Puritans. Middleton, singularly without malice in this instance, mentions Plum-Porridge, "born an Anabaptist, a fell foe to fish and Fridays," who declares against "any Fasting-day" or "anything belongs to Emberweek" and speaks of Candlemass-Eve as "so frampole the Puritans will never yield to't." [172] Lipsalve, with dissimulating piety, tells of being converted from the "two very notorious crimes" of "eating fish on Fridays" and "speaking reverently of the clergy." [173] Marston's allusion to the same prejudice carries a slanderous charge, for Malheureux, though boasting that she is "none of the wicked that eat fish o' Fridays," admits that she is a woman of no good character.[174]

The Puritan's opposition to these forms was often an unreasonable objection to the letter rather than to the spirit of the observance. He deemed them wicked merely because they originated in the Roman Church, and his aversion was sometimes marked with a stubbornness equal to that of the conservatives who blindly sought to force these customs upon him. Gazet, a free-thinker in one of these plays, expresses the disgust felt by a mere observer of religious prejudices. He disavows sympathy with the Protestant, Jesuit and Mahometan faiths and particularly with that one which

> Allows us to eat flesh
> In Lent, though it be rotten, rather than be
> Thought superstitious, as your zealous cobbler,

[171] 1, p. 251.
[172] *The Inner Temple Masque,* vol. 7, 203.
[173] *Family of Love,* 4, 1.
[174] *The Dutch Courtesan,* 1, 2.

> And learned butcher, preach at Amsterdam,
> Over a hotchpotch.[175]

Gazet in open revolt further declares, "I would not be confined in my belief"—one of the few instances where the dramatist views the Puritan and his prejudices from the larger standpoint of freedom of religious thought rather than from the more narrow attitude of irritation at his peculiarities and beliefs.

A play[176] written during King James' reign reflects in the conversation of some rustics the agitation over this matter of holy days which was going on in English communities. The King had revived the persecution of the Puritans by enforcing, among other things, the strict observance of all the festivals of the Church. All Englishmen who did not conform were to feel the extremities of the law. A group which always acted according to conscience, oblivious to royal edict or threatened persecution, is in this play presented by Hortano who says, "Indeed, 'twere a gay thing if you could put down these Holy-days as you say. Methinks 'twere an easy matter as well as we ha' put down the Fasting-days."[177] Acuto's reply shows him to be more aware of the real situation. "For neither have you put down the fasting days, because they are still bidden in churches, nor is the case alike: for Fasting is private, and cannot so well be punished, but if you come not to Church, up you go for a Recusant, an you were my father."[178] As the rustics leave, Securus and Hermito indulge in some remarks about their Puritan acquaintances. Securus divines the seriousness of the discontent by his question, "Would you have imagined that such plain fellows as these be, should call a business of this nature in question? By this you may guess what stern heads we have to deal withal, and how easy a matter to keep them in order." Hermito replies: "It is somewhat strange. And the more unlearned the men are, the harder to be satisfied. But the hope is, that as mad men do best service when some of their like are most unruly, so these men being alike unskillful will soon confound each other, and so give over the business."[179] Such was the answer and the hope of both Bishops and King, a reasoning which

[175] *The Renegado,* 1, 1.
[176] *Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fools.*
[177] *Ibid.,* 2, 1.
[178] *Ibid.,* 2, 4.
[179] *Ibid.,* 2, 1.

history was soon to prove fallacious. Neither King James nor his successor realized the strength and the scope of the Puritan movement. Like Hermito, they believed the Puritans to be a sect, an unruly sect which should be punished, but which would eventually confound itself by its own rashness and disobedience; whereas, the marvel lay in the fact that 'such plain fellows' actually did have such 'stirring heads,' and that their numbers constituted them, even then, not only a sect but also a faction and a party.

Presently the hermit, to his own satisfaction, settles the question of holy days with arguments intended to confute the Puritans' several objections to them. "It is true they were all working days at the first. For which purpose it is said, such work as thou doest, work it in those six days, and not on the seventh day. Yet God did never forbid any of those six days to be kept holy. And the Christian Church hath appointed many days to be kept holy in memory of Saints which suffered diverse torments for Christ's sake, who suffered all for them, and for them all. And those to be kept to the world's end, that their facts and fame might never die, but encourage others to tread their bloody but heavenly steps. Therefore, since the Church of God and custom of Christian countries have so ordered it, let no man's private rashness presume such alteration, as to make away or put out the Holy-days, but with due reverence to observe them." [180]

The hatred of fasting days, as was true of all these aversions, grew more bitter as time passed. Goggle, a Puritan character of the last decade before the theatres closed, revives the old phrases. To Nevergood, of whom we know nothing admirable except that he did observe the days of the Church, Goggle says, "Necessity . . . makes thy teeth observe unconscionable Fridays, profane fasting-days, with Lent and antichristian ember weeks." [181]

According to the tenets of several sects, the taking of oaths was sinful, and as a general rule the scrupulous Puritan was very conscientious as to this Scriptural prohibition. After the Restoration this scruple became more closely identified with the sect of Quakers, who may have stressed its importance more than did the Puritans of Elizabethan times. Unlike some of the foregoing prejudices, this one is not based upon animosity nor is it in itself exceptionally striking,

[180] *Ibid.*, 2, 3.
[181] *Hey for Honesty*, 4, 1.

which accounts for its infrequent notice by the dramatists. In one instance the author of *The Puritan* supports his favorite charge of hypocrisy by means of this antipathy. A servant tells his companions that it is proper to commit a most foul sin but cautions them not to "swear" they did so.[182] Twice we find Jonson taking note of this prejudice in an off-hand even jovial manner. The merchant Kitely has a secret to impart to his servant Cash, but when the fellow is reluctant to swear secrecy Kitely is puzzled, knowing that "he's no precisian" for he plays games discountenanced by the Puritans and he has been heard to swear.[183] One of the few gestures not to her discredit is Mistress Polish's sacrifice of this scruple. Though actuated by villainous motives, she and Nurse Keep have sworn to keep their little plot secret, even swearing it upon *The Practice of Piety*, one of the brethren's favorite books.[184]

Some watchmen in one of Glapthorne's plays are talking about the Inquisition, and one of them says:

> Neighbor Mandivell
> You are a zealous brother, a Translator,
> Tis such a monster as will swallow thee,
> And all the Brethren at Amsterdam,
> And in New England at a morsel: verily
> Your yeas and nays will not appease its stomach.[185]

The same expressions draw forth more bitter derision in other circumstances. Roger, one of Davenport's characters, warns his friend Slightall that when his fortune is "gone and wasted" he will repent it. "Pox upon you," sneers Slightall, "we shall have you turn Puritan, leave big mouth'd oaths to swear by yea and nay." [186]

It goes without saying that profanity was abjured by even the luke-warm Puritan, but to this there is little notice given by the dramatists, probably because it instinctively resolves itself into a question of good taste among all groups rather than becomes the scruple of any religious sect. In the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair* Jonson is making a thrust at the precise people when he hopes that

[182] 1, 3.
[183] *Every Man in His Humour*, 3, 2.
[184] The Magnetic Lady, 4, 1. For a discussion of other religious books then in favor see E. N. S. Thompson, *Controversy Between the Puritans and the Stage*, pp. 220-222.
[185] *Wit in a Constable*, 5, 1.
[186] *A New Trick to Cheat the Devil*, 1, 2.

he will not be "challenged of profaneness" because a mad man cries "God quit you" or "bless you." None the less, Mistress Purge asserts with real puritanical seriousness that it would be just as well to say "men refuse them" as "God refuse them." [187] *Hey for Honesty* has its fling at this scruple. Carion declares concerning Goggle, "By St. Hugh's bones, he looks like the very ghost of a shoemaker's shop." Goggle is quite impervious to the insult but much concerned about the moral lapse of his worldly companion and beseeches him to "swear not by St. Hugh, that canoniz'd cobbler." [188]

From this it might be concluded that Puritanism was born in a spirit of negation and that it augmented its ranks and held its sway through the power of fear and hatred. This was true to a certain extent, particularly in the early years. The stage never ceased to deride the Puritan from this angle. As social forces and as a faction Puritans came to have greater battles than doctrinal ones to fight, but as individuals these strict people were the same irreconcilable haters of formality at the time of their triumph as at the beginning of their separation from the Church. But a new faith could not thrive upon denials only. In the two decades following the Queen's accession several unsuccessful movements were afoot within the Church itself to outline a manner of discipline for those not able to adhere to all its teachings and practices. Isolated congregations that had severed connections with the Church followed their own inclinations as to forms of worship, and gradually, aided by the example of churches on the Continent, formulated a positive expression of their beliefs. Thus, by the time the dramatists had begun in earnest to satirize the Puritan there were not only scruples and negations—the things he refused to believe and do—but there were also modes of worship, well-formulated creeds, and most of all, a Puritan character which was unique and which had crystallized into a type unlike any other.

Thomas Cartwright, the Cambridge divine, had been driven to the Continent because of his agitations within the Church, and had while there assisted in the preparation of a Book of Discipline modelled after the Genevan and Dutch forms of worship and manner of belief. The "Book" was first adopted by a Separatist group in England in 1588 and within the next few years it became very

[187] *Family of Love,* 1, 3.
[188] 4, 1.

popular with the people and was approved by several hundred dissenting ministers. In 1587 a Puritan had been committed to the Tower by the Queen for presenting this Book of Discipline to Parliament for adoption,[189] but a half century was to elapse and a Civil War to be in progress before the Puritans were to succeed in establishing any such system by civil law. The mass of the nonconforming people in Queen Elizabeth's day and especially the Puritans of the two following reigns were not eager to adopt this or any other particular form, yet the zeal of certain early dissenters for their "discipline" was so great that the word became one of the symbols of Puritanism. Jonson implies that the term was much affected by the Puritans, although Cutbeard is surely not one of them when he alludes to the vow of chastity as a practice "taken away from us, thanks be to discipline." [190] Tribulation speaks of the "beauteous discipline," [191] and a sister of the Family is able to remember the "wellspring of discipline" [192] in spite of her sadly muddled brain.

The chief feature of the Puritan service was the sermon, a long and ardently delivered discourse which was divided into "doctrine", the subject under explanation, and "use", the practical inference to be derived from it. "Three draughts of sack in doctrines, and four in uses," [193] is the way Jonson alludes to the sermon plan, with a "sober-drawn exhortation of six hours," and "prayers droned out over iron chests as if they were charms to break them," [194] as additional light upon the Puritans' mode of worship. Cowley's Cutter, thinking how it would be if he should preach to himself, sneers at "the act, the object, the use and application;" [195] but a more sincere follower of the faith recalls, while watching a play, how she could at her Saint Anth'lins, "Sleeping and all, sit twenty times as long." [196] Both the form of the service and the status of the minister were based upon the Calvinistic doctrine of simplicity and the theory which called for an appeal to reason, in contrast to the sensory appeal

[189] Campbell, 2, p. 169.
[190] *Silent Woman,* 5, 1.
[191] *The Alchemist,* 3, 1.
[192] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 3, 2.
[193] *The Magnetic Lady,* 3, 1.
[194] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[195] *The Guardian,* 2, 2.
[196] *The Muses' Looking Glass,* 2, 4.

made by the forms and ceremonies. The minister was chosen by the congregation, and in a spiritual sense he was declared to be above any earthly ruler. The Book of Discipline asserted that all preachers were equal in power, none but God having authority over them. To the intelligent Puritan divine this theory was in perfect accord with a proper personal sobriety and a fitting obedience to the social order, but to the ignorant man who rushed from his candle making, his loom, or his cobbling directly into the pulpit, the new doctrine may have been responsible for the actual existence of some of the monstrosities presented on the stage. Of the varied Puritan company that trooped across the Elizabethan stage, several of the most salient figures are ministers. The first was the "upstart preacher" of *New* Custom, in whose wake come Rabbi Busy, Tribulation Wholesome, Ananias Goggle, even Languebeau Snuffle—to mention only a few of the best known and most deftly satirized.

The Puritan services were spoken of as "exercises" and "preachings". At one time Jonson lists "Puritan preachings" with masques, plays, mad folks, and "other strange sights to be seen daily;" [197] and years later Shackerly Marmion, one of Jonson's most ardent admirers and followers, recalls that golden but perverse age when there were "so many plays and Puritan preachings." [198] The faithful attendance of the devout at their meetings gave occasion for no little exaggeration. Widow Plus relates the experiences she has had with a strict Puritan husband who would "rise early, before his servants, for religion's sake, and go ungartered, unbuttoned, nay untrussed, to morning prayer." [199] So great was his zeal that before great guests he would shame her by rising from the table to make sure of a good seat at an afternoon sermon. Even Bold, direct opposite of the reverent man, sarcastically confesses that he frequently goes to Blackfriars in spite of the fact that he is an unworthy vessel to "partake or retain any of the delicious dew that is there distilled." [200] Mistress Purge and Dorcas are the two most assiduous worshippers of all. Dorcas is given to dividing her day into exercises,[201] and the love-lorn Gudgeon finds that he must pursue Mistress Purge "from

[197] *The Silent Woman*, 2, 1.
[198] *Holland's Leaguer.*
[199] *The Puritan*, 2, 1.
[200] *Amends for Ladies*, 3, 2.
[201] *The City Match*, 4, 5.

exercise to exercise and from Family to Family." [202] Only illness can prevent her "spending the morning at the Family," a practice which, as her husband later reveals, is her "ordinary course." [203] Upon one occasion she is found going to her exercise by night, a circumstance which Middleton intends to be no compliment. In reality this was a singular mark of devotion and courage on the part of Dissenters, for their secret services were held at night to out-wit the watchfulness of officers. For some reason uniformity of worship was supposed to be necessary to the peace of the country and was looked upon as the equivalent of loyalty to the Crown. On the part of Church and State the Puritans' determined effort to leave the Church was matched by an attitude of utter miscomprehension and by an opposition ready to use any measure to forestall its success. Meetings of Dissenters were declared seditious, their places of worship spied upon, and the worshippers rudely dispersed and frequently cast into prison. *The Family of Love* alludes to the secrecy of the Familists' gatherings, to their passwords and knocks,[204] to the uncomfortable "Hole in the Wall where they assembled together in the daytime, like so many bees under a hive." [205]

Prophesying was a religious exercise started by the more liberal bishops in the early years of Elizabeth's reign. Clergymen of a diocese would meet, listen to a sermon to which the public was admitted, and after the departure of the outsiders they would discuss Scriptural subjects and exchange opinions. This proved of value to many clergymen but the Queen would have none of it among her licensed clergy and prophesyings were accordingly suppressed. But the practice was carried over into the congregations of Dissenters and the 'prophesying' which was ridiculed by the dramatists was a continuation of these early efforts. It corresponds to the more modern mid-week services or prayer-meetings of Protestant bodies. When the word is used in the satirical Elizabethan sense it is generally intended to convey the most extreme meaning—that of an extemporaneous rhapsody which the Puritan was supposed to attain at the climax of his preaching. Jonson may have had some such

[202] *The Family of Love,* 3, 5.
[203] *Ibid.,* 2, 1.
[204] 3, 3.
[205] 4, 1.

heated scene in mind when Busy declares that he will "eat exceedingly and prophesy." [206] Lamias' "contemplations" [207] and the Cutter's "visions" [208] are of this order.

Many were the thrusts made at the democratic, impulsive atmosphere of Puritan worship. The "synodical question" as to Whitsunales and Maygames, which hammered in Gabriel's head and which he thought should be put to the brethren illustrates the Puritan's fondness for discussion.[209] Aside from the prejudice the dramatists would have felt merely because such a mode was Puritanical, there was undoubtedly a genuine revulsion on the part of many of them as they saw the noisy impromptu meetings of Dissenters substituted for the formal, well-ordered services of the Established Church. Whether because they were attached to the old forms or merely disgusted with the new, few could exhibit Randolph's sound sense as they regarded the changing conditions. When he wrote *Hey for Honesty* the crisis was not far distant, but he jests about household chaplains being out of date like old almanacs and good-naturedly observes that "every man can now say grace, and preach, and say prayers to themselves, or (which is better) forget to say any at all." [210] Had even a semblance of this tolerant spirit prevailed in either faction, civil strife might have been averted, but from the earliest years each side steadily opposed and sneered at the other's accepted forms. Perverse Doctrine resents the "sounding voice and audacity bold" of the new ministers,[211] and Webster makes one of his vilest jests about Puritans "that have sore throats with over-training." [212] Quarlous the gamester vows that for a certain woman he would be willing to endure fifteen sermons a week—"and such coarse and loud ones as some of them must be!" He also comments upon "the noise made in a question of predestination by the good laborers and painful eaters assembled together." [213] If the dramatists' words may be taken seriously the Puritan was always ready, in church and out, to make a spirited defense of his doctrine. Ismenia, a character in *The Maid in the*

[206] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[207] *Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fools,* 3, 2.
[208] *The Cutter of Coleman Street,* Acts 3 and 4.
[209] *Covent Garden Weeded,* 2, 2.
[210] 5, 1.
[211] *New Custom,* 1, 1.
[212] *The Duchess of Malfi,* 4, 2.
[213] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.

Mill hints that the fondness for discussion was carried over into household visits, remarking, as a protest against too much questioning—"A puritan hostess, cousin, would scorn these questions." [214] Mistress Polish holds up for an example a zealous friend of hers who disputed with the doctors of divinity at her own table.[215] Tribulation, in the very midst of his villainies, is prone to "leave off to make long-winded exercises;" [216] Dorcas is able to "out-pray a preacher at St. Antlin's;" [217] while Mistress Honeysuckle reproved for her 'running tongue,' can only continue—"Talk and make a noise, no matter to what purpose; I have learned that with going to puritan lectures." [218]

The Puritan's manner of worship and his devotion to the 'cause' cannot be separated from his underlying and inexhaustible attribute of zeal. His fervor was most frequently manifest in the extravagance of speech so cleverly and unsparingly satirized in many plays. Marlowe was the first to indulge in this sport, his parody of a Puritan gathering in *Doctor Faustus,* written as early as 1588, being unique at that time when the few references to the Puritans were brief and attempted no characterization. Wagner, laughing at his own pride, announces that he will 'set his countenance like a Precisian and begin to speak thus': "Truly my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, would inform your worships; and so the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren." [219] An ardent manner and an extravagant speech were, at least to the dramatists, so inextricably a part of the Puritan personality that no character portrayal of any length or consequence can be found devoid of this singularity. Stupido, Florilla, even the infamous Snuffle, is each zealous after his own manner; while ill-famed Mistress Purge is commended for her zeal and purity of devotion.[220] The long-suffering Purge cannot tell whether the absence of his wife or the ardor of her devotion is the more distressing to him. Torn with jealousy, he is eager for Mistress Purge to return

[214] 1, 2.
[215] *Magnetic Lady,* 1, 1.
[216] *Alchemist,* 3, 2.
[217] *City Match,* 4, 5.
[218] *Westward Ho,* 1, 2.
[219] Scene 2.
[220] *The Family of Love,* 2, 3.

home, even though he knows that she will come "red hot with zeal, and big with melting tears." While ruminating upon the wrongs he endures Purge recalls one particularly ridiculous figure of speech he has heard—"a pretty wooden sentence in a preamble to an exercise, where the reader prayed that men of his coat might grow up like cedars to make good wainscot in the House of Sincerity." He laments the fact that such "wooden pellets" as this can be so entrancing to silly women like his wife as to send them home "fraught with matter able to take down and mortify their husbands." [221]

An aggressive zeal is at the base of each of Jonson's various Puritan figures, and the same spirit is responsible for many of his shorter bits of satire directed against the sectaries. In *The Silent Woman,* Truewit, warning Morose against marrying a "precise" woman, says, "You must feast all the silenced brethren once in three days; salute the sisters; entertain the whole family, or wood of them, and hear long-winded exercises, singing, and catechisings which you are not given to, and yet must give for; to please the zealous matron your wife, who, for the holy cause, will cozen you over and above." [222] Later, Morose sends Cutbeard for a minister "with a soft, low voice," Truewit further admonishing him to "get one of the silenced ministers, a zealous brother would torment him purely." [223] In *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* there is mention made of "the loud pure wives of Banbury;" [224] and in *News from the New World,* of the "zealous women, that will outgroan the groaning wives of Edinburgh." [225]

The Puritans of *The Alchemist* are only a trifle less zealous than hypocritical, their ardent piety assisting their own self-deception and hiding their schemes from other eyes. Ananias proudly announces that he is sent from Tribulation Wholesome, "our very zealous pastor." [226] He finds a certain satisfaction, even a justification for his

[221] *Ibid.,* 3, 3.
[222] 2, 1. Aurelia disapproves of the Puritan Widow and her associates for much the same reasons. *The Guardian,* 4, 7.
[223] *Ibid.,* 2, 3. Cutbeard uses the word "silent" with double force, playing upon the theme of the comedy and also alluding to the many non-conformist ministers who had been silenced after the Hampton Conference of 1604. Apropos of this, Tribulation longs for the "restoring of the silenced saints." *Alchemist,* 3, 1.
[224] Vol. 3, 159.
[225] Vol. 3, 137.
[226] 2, 1.

presence in this doubtful company because his foreboding intuitions regarding Subtle proceed from "pure zeal." Being rebuked for his caution, by this very same zealous pastor, Ananias is sad that his "zeal hath so offended." [227] When all the foolish business is over and the rogues are confounded, still the zeal of the Puritans is not quenched nor their flow of vituperation lessened. "Locusts of the foul pit," "profane as Bel and the Dragon," "worse than the grasshoppers, or the lice of Egypt," "scorpions and caterpillars" are phrases which bespeak Ananias' resentment; to all of which Lovewit calmly rejoins, "Good zeal, lie still a little while." [228] In the denouement even Tribulation admonishes the fury of his brother with "Peace, Deacon Ananias," and "be patient Ananias;' and Lovewit must admit that he is able to dispute with this man only with a cudgel.

To Jonson zealousness was so synonymous with Puritanism that he gives to his most representative character the title Zeal-of-the-Land Busy. Busy is the very embodiment of immoderate ill-directed zeal, he says he is "zealous for the cause," [229] and not a single speech of the many he makes fails to consistently and relentlessly develop this characteristic. If anything, his manner grows more violent as the play progresses. Upon such a ridiculous occasion as undertaking an argument with a puppet Busy thus publicly prays: "Assist me, zeal, fill me, fill me, that is, make me full;" and those who listen can only wonder "what a desperate, profane wretch is this! is there any ignorance or impudence like his, to call his zeal to fill him against a puppet." [230] In his argument with Leatherhead over the licensing of plays Busy truly outdoes even himself: "I have long opened my mouth wide, and gaped. I have gaped as the oyster for the tide, after thy destruction." [231] "Low, familiar and profane jargon," [232] is Gifford's terse comment.

The character of Mistress Polish shows that Jonson was well aware that some of the zeal of the Puritans was nothing but the gratification of the gossiping instinct and the expression of personal

[227] 3, 1.
[228] 5, 3.
[229] *Bartholomew Fair,* 5, 5.
[230] *Ibid.,* 5, 3.
[231] *Ibid.,* 5, 3.
[232] "The Works of Ben Jonson," 2, p. 205.

forwardness. In the presence of her superiors she monopolizes the conversation with her unsought admonitions and illustrations. After she has left, Lady Loadstone tries to mollify the disgruntled feelings of her guests and excuse the rude garrulity of Mistress Polish by graciously reminding them that she is

> "A good woman!
> But when she is impertinent, grows earnest,
> A little troublesome and out of season:
> Her love and zeal transport her."[233]

One of the few instances where the Puritans assume a Scriptural tone of speech is noted in *The Staple of News*. The imitation is probably taken from one of the prophecies in Revelation, a portion of the Scripture which has always most intrigued those least capable of expounding it. In this instance, Jonson is ridiculing a group of fanatics in a barber shop—"a profane shop"—who lay down "six pennyworth" to hear Thomas read the news from Amsterdam:

> The saints do write they expect a prophet shortly
> The prophet Baal, to be sent over to them,
> To calculate a time, and half a time,
> And the whole time, according to Naometry.[234]

Many other dramatists, though none so consistently and so minutely as Jonson, mark this feature of the Elizabethan Puritan. Randolph laughs as heartily and even with better humour at the ardor and flowery speech of the Puritans he has observed. The extravagant figures of the "zealous brother," Ananias Goggle, stand out more boldly than do the speeches of either the earlier Ananias or of Rabbi Busy, though Randolph's figures are not so skillfully blended with the character and action which they serve to ornament. Goggle styles himself "a zealous saint of Amsterdam, whose nose is forward to promote the cause;" he admits that he has a zeal to be rich, and speaks so violently throughout that Carion believes his "too fervent zeal" has almost made tinder of his thread-bare cloak.[235] Bird and Mistress Flowerdew fairly revel in their zeal. A meticulous 'zeal' bids Bird say "filthy inns" in place of "inns";

[233] *The Magnetic Lady*, 1, 1.
[234] *Staple of News*, 3, 1.
[235] *Hey for Honesty*, 4, 1.

it is a "zealous prayer," [236] in his estimation, that asks for the utter destruction of the London playhouses; and 'zeal' is the abettor he summons when he would see a play and yet not be defiled by it. Mistress Flowerdew fumes still more fiercely:

> Iniquity aboundeth, though pure zeal
> Teach, preach, huff, puff, and snuff at it; yet still,
> Still it aboundeth.[237]

If the Puritans actually were such outrageous persons it is small wonder that a charming play like *The Chances* should take occasion to mention, in terms not so amiable, the "bawling puritan, whose sanctified zeal shall rumble like an earthquake." [238] There was no limit to the banter. We read of the zeal that would "choke ten precisians earnest in their hothouse of convention;" [239] and of the Puritan chandler who had "run mad with illuminations," was "very strangely possest, and talk'd idly as if he had a noise of bells in his head." [240] It is easy to understand the disgust of the sensible matron who has been persuaded by a friend to employ one of these zealous persons as a maid and to appreciate the genuine emotion that prompts her entreaty: "From thy zeal, the frantic lady's judgments, and Histriomastix, deliver me." [241]

When he said grace the Puritan was supposed to be endowed with extraordinary volubility. *Bartholomew Fair* twice takes note of his lengthy prayers made before meals. An old elder from Danbury "says a grace as long as his breath lasts him," and Quarlous deplores a dry grace as long as a tablecloth, droned out till all the meat on the board has forgot it was that day in the kitchen.[242] When Mistress Polish makes her unwelcome visit, in *The Magnetic Lady,* her whole miserable tirade is described by one of the listeners as a "long grace," which being over, gives them hope of dinner.[243] The "inspired graces" of one of Middleton's 'brethren' were able to "starve a

[236] *Ibid.,* 1, 1.
[237] *Ibid.,* 1, 2.
[238] *The Chances,* 5, 2.
[239] *The Hollander,* scene 1.
[240] *A Fine Companion,* 5, 2.
[241] *The City Match,* 1, 1.
[242] 1, 1.
[243] 1, 1.

wicked man with length;" [244] Thomas Nabbes lists "a puritan's long grace over short Commons" as one of several detested customs;[245] and Mayme tells about a schoolmaster who "cools a feast with his long grace." [246] Even poor befuddled Gabriel premeditates a fit thanksgiving to be rendered before meat in Taverns, as the spirit should enable him.[247]

Illustrations of this absurd fluency could be continued indefinitely, for seldom did a stage Puritan open his mouth without adding to the overwhelming volume. One woman was known to quibble about being addressed in "idle words," but she meant the idle words of others, not of herself or her sect.[248] This form of satire had its basis in fact. The times were rugged and the speech of the most godly and circumspect was tinged with an acerbity that could not always pass for righteous fervor and earnestness. Thomas Cartwright represents the higher type of Puritan but even his language was at times far from apostolic. Only the name Gosson, Stubbe or Prynne need be mentioned to justify this form of caricature with which the dramatists so frequently embellished their plays.

It is not easy to restore the true features of a group which lived three hundred years ago, even though from that age there survives a wealth of material which justifies and praises and an equally great volume which disparages and censures. When we consider how different from those of our own age were the customs and standards of Elizabethan times we face added difficulties. These and other factors must be considered in determining whether the Puritan was as crude and ignorant as the dramatists have pictured him. Historians, howsoever they disagree in their appraisal of Puritanism as a moral and spiritual force, are willing to admit that it has been a factor in educational progress, particularly among the common people. Whether struggling in England, Scotland, Holland or America, the Puritan has always sought for himself and his children the best educational opportunities. Puritanism was early and firmly entrenched in Scotland, where the respect of even the most humble Scotchman for 'learning' is proverbial. Tribulation, though

[244] *Family of Love,* 3, 3.
[245] *Tuttenham's Court,* 4, 1.
[246] *The City Match,* 2, 1.
[247] *Covent Garden Weeded,* 2, 2.
[248] *An Humourous Day's Mirth,* p. 59.

his judgment may not be worth much in this particular, speaks of "a learned elder, one of Scotland." [249]

The Queen, it is true, encouraged the study of the classics, and favored certain poets and other literary craftsmen but it cannot be said that she promoted the education of the masses of her people; in fact she heartily disapproved of their discussion of or participation in religious matters. On the other hand, Puritan leaders taught that all believers, both men and women, should be able to read the Bible, and they were equally eager that those who did not believe should possess the means whereby they might come to know the truth. The earnest Puritan was so convinced that he possessed the truth that he was sure if others did but know it they too would be convinced. Reading, writing, preaching and discussion he considered vital to his own religious life and to the promulgation of his faith. Measured by the state of learning then existent among the masses, the Puritan of Elizabethan times was a leader in the spread of knowledge among the common people. Judged according to our modern standards, or according to the university standards of that day, he was a narrow-minded, intolerant man, of that type whom we could perhaps call 'ignorant.'

For some years after Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne a number of her statesmen and courtiers and many learned divines were among those, who, though they outwardly conformed, yet advocated such changes in the Anglican Church as to place them among the first Puritans. The clever Francis Bacon was surely no Puritan, but in his early manhood he wrote a treatise entitled *An Advertisement Touching the Controversies of the Church of England* in which he exposed the corruptions of the Church. Burghley, Walsingham, even Leicester, were politically on the side of the Puritans, staunchly advocating England's alliance with the Protestant Netherlands and serving in the defeat of Spain. Walsingham, the strongest Puritan figure at Court, was the father-in-law of Sir Philip Sidney, also an earnest Protestant. Closely associated with them was the poet Spenser, whom, with Milton of a later day, the Puritans have most delighted to call their own. *The Shepherd's Calendar* betrays a close sympathy with those who would reform the abuses of the Church, and *The Fairy Queen* strikes the keynote of a lofty Puritanism little

[249] *Alchemist,* 3, 1.

understood by lesser spirits of Spenser's own day and not at all recognizable as that brand of Puritanism which the dramatists and others derided. It may have been that only the most learned Puritans of his age understood Spenser's language or appreciated the purity of his verse. Surely the type of man whom the dramatists scorned had little in common with poetic art, but probably the impression the playwrights give of the Puritan disliking poetry is as accurate as the general misrepresentation to which they subjected him. According to Brome, only in the upside-down world where all wit, and mirth, and good society are among the hirelings, clowns, and tradesmen, do we find that "all their poets are puritans." [250] Chapman likewise mentions the Puritans' distrust of poetry in *An Humourous Day's Mirth,* where the "wonderful rare and witty" verses which Labervele reads to comfort his childless wife are to her only "vain poetry," which she prays he will burn.[251] It remained for Cowley, bitter opponent of the Puritans as he was, to see this matter in its true light. He evidently was not blind to their love of at least sacred verse, for in the midst of his denunciations of them he says:

> Though other arts poor and neglected grow,
> They'll admit Poetry, which was always so.[252]

In Elizabeth's time, learned divines were usually the leaders of the doctrinal dissensions within the Church. Grindal, the Archbishop of Canterbury under the Queen, was so definitely on the side of the reformers as to be suspended from office. Many others, like John Cartwright, were not afraid to face the loss of their callings or to risk banishment for freedom of conscience. When the Queen drove the more fearless of these eminent Puritans from their livings and then persecuted them for forming separate congregations she was forcing them to become itinerant preachers and teachers and to disseminate their doctrines among the masses. Within a generation this put a premium upon the learning of the reformers. Puritanism was neither expedient nor fashionable for the upper classes. The Puritan of the first quarter of the seventeenth century and the Roundhead of the second quarter were quite different from the

[250] *The Antipodes,* 1, 6.
[251] P. 58.
[252] Prologue to *The Guardian,* dated 1641.

courtly, scholarly, non-conformists of the earlier part of the Queen's reign. Educated ministers and university scholars were always to be found among dissenters, but the general trend was toward the rapid growth of Puritanism among the common people, with a corresponding loss among the wealthy and learned.

However, the spread of Puritanism among the less privileged classes of English society was but partly due to the persecution of those who followed the new doctrines. Other factors had long been at work to bring about this condition. The districts in England where Puritanism was to become most strongly entrenched had for many years been open to the more liberal religious influences. Early in English history a stream of influence began to pour in from the Low Countries. William the Conqueror had brought over a number of weavers from Flanders, and Edward the third had encouraged the coming of skilled Flemish artisans, who had settled along the eastern coast, principally in Norfolk, Suffolk,[253] and Essex. Wherever these Flemish and Dutch artisans made their homes, there were to be found the strongholds of religious dissension. Later they attracted to their towns and counties the religious exiles who all during the sixteenth century fled from the persecutions on the Continent. The one polemical moral which so illumines the story of these early years does not fail to take note of the religious migrations. Ignorance complains bitterly of the English reformers who welcomed the immigrants.

> They have brought in one, a young upstart lad, as it appears,
> I am sure he hath not been in the realm very many years.[254]

London and Norwich were the centers of this foreign influx, and these cities with their surrounding districts were also the hotbeds of English Puritanism. From Norwich went out the first Separatist colony to Holland; in the adjoining county of Lincoln were organized the congregations which settled New England; and it was from the southern and eastern counties that the army of Parliament was to be recruited. From these localities came Cromwell, Hampden, Vane, Sidney, and other Puritan leaders.

[253] Heywood takes particular notice of "your Suffolk Puritan." *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody,* Part 2.

[254] New Custom, 1, 1.

Numerically the refugees were not so important for they constituted but a small portion of the dissenting population of England, but their industrial and educational influence was far-reaching. They brought to England a knowledge of the crafts and mechanical arts, in which the English at this time were not proficient. They made window glass, pins, needles, tapestry, furniture, all manner of fine cloth and lace, thread, hats, and gloves. Many of them were tailors, others were gardeners and not a few were merchants. The Queen recognized the material prosperity they brought to her country and accorded them a measure of freedom denied her own native Puritans. They were permitted to form their separate congregations and choose their own preachers. By law each artisan was required to take an English apprentice, and thus the sphere of their religious and material influence was extended in the most effective personal way. Concerning the Netherlanders, who came in greatest numbers, Campbell says, "They came from a land where education was universal. Each man brought his Bible, which he could read for himself and neighbours. Earnestness they had, for they came not to better their condition, but simply to find religious freedom. They were not paupers seeking alms, they were independent and self-supporting, coming from a country where beggars were unknown. Their daily life was a sermon on the virtues of industry, temperance, and chastity." [255]

From actual observation the dramatists saw that most of the Puritans were not men of lofty lineage but that they belonged to the group made up of bakers, tinkers, cobblers, tailors, merchants and servants. These were the men who threatened the stage with extinction and it is not to be wondered that the dramatists delighted to play upon the lowly origin and social insignificance of those who opposed them. Moreover, not a few of the dramatists were of the same station in life and were only too familiar with the intolerant, narrow type of mind predominant in the average Puritan group.

The theatre-goer evidently had no difficulty in properly placing a zealous cobbler, a learned butcher, a reformed basket maker, an unconscionable scrivener, or a rebel fustian-weaver. "A Scrivener, a Box-maker, a Cloth-worker, a Fuller, and such mechanical sordid people," make up a group within the Church which one disgruntled

[255] *The Puritan in England, Scotland and America,* 1, p. 493.

playwright thought should be "expos'd to publique laughter." [256] Randolph says it is absurd for a comic poet

> To catch the popular breath and ignorant praise
> Of preaching cobblers, carmen, tinners, tailors.[257]

"Seeming honest," identified as an art peculiar to the Puritans, is declared to be unbecoming to the young sons and heirs of the city, since it makes them "look so like our 'prentices." [258] Concerning Dall-pate, who seeks preferment, Platus first asks, "Is he not a tradesman?" [259] Just as the smugness of the middle class is always held up to scorn, so were the artisans and tradespeople of this age taken as legitimate objects of fun and sarcasm for Elizabethan stages.[260] And as the years passed, after 1600, and the Puritans came to more and more represent the middle classes, their particular callings and their celebrated neighborhoods, Blackfriars and Banbury in particular, became commonplaces of the stage.

There is no offense in the fact, but only in the manner of speaking it, that most Puritan preachers caricatured in the plays—Busy, Tribulation, Snuffle, to mention but three—are revealed as just having left their cobbling, weaving and candle-making to take up preaching for a livelihood. Poverty and the persecution of the sects had gradually made this the usual procedure for supplying the pulpits. Furthermore, when the Puritan is accused of condoning and even boasting of his lack of learning he is not unlike the ignorant man of any age. Dull-pate has no qualms about informing his superior that he has never had university training;[261] Tribulation admits that it is an "ignorant zeal" which haunts Ananias, but he excuses him because he is a man who "by revelation" has a "competent knowledge of the truth;" [262] and Quarlous tells of "the fellow of a most arrogant and invincible dullness" who "derides all an-

[256] Peter Hausted, Preface to *The Rival Friends.*
[257] *Hey for Honesty,* 3, 3.
[258] *Northward Ho,* 1, 1.
[259] *Hey for Honesty,* 1, 3.
[260] Thompson has discussed the dramatists' contempt for the middle classes, irrespective of their Puritanical leanings, as shown in such plays as *Every Man In His Humour* and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle. The Controversity Between the Puritans and the Stage,* pp. 208-9.
[261] *Hey for Honesty,* 1, 2.
[262] *Alchemist,* 3, 2.

tiquity, defies any other learning than inspiration." [263] The weaver with whom D'Olive has such sport is described as "blown up b' inspiration." [264] Mayne has in mind the same condition among the Puritan ministers when he compares Salewit, the poet in curate's garb, with a "Geneva weaver in black, who has left the loom and entered into the ministry for conscience's sake." [265]

The dramatists were unfair when they refused to represent or even see any class of Puritans save this unlearned, disagreeable one, and when they carried their caricature to unworthy length. They forgot that a man may be poor, unlearned, even religious, and at the same time an inoffensive, even an attractive character, as many of the Puritans no doubt were. Aside from Prynne and a very few other actual persons whose learning was but an added reproach to their conduct, all Puritans in Elizabethan plays are crude, uncultivated, even stupid characters. Stupido—more of whom later—is, as his name signifies, the most persistently ignorant man imaginable. Surrounded by culture, his mind is adamant to all save his own self-sufficient doctrines. He is the exaggeration of a type of doctrinal mind which was then promulgating the faith of the Puritans in the universities, particularly at Oxford. His ignorance is less excusable and not nearly so humourous as that displayed by the average carping, crude Puritan found in the drama after 1600. In his Preface to *The Rival Friends,* Peter Hausted, writing some years later, is of the same opinion as the author of the Parnassus plays. He declares the precisians are "mock scholars" as well as "mock-christians" and that they are at open defiance with all kinds of learning.

Of obvious unfairness is the lack of intellectual balance and the want of personal grace and charm which characterize practically every stage Puritan. Frequently there is a deliberate exhibition of rudeness such as Middleton pictures at a christening scene.[266] As the scene ends, the surly host complains about how the ill-mannered Puritan gossips have misplaced his "fair needlework stools" and "have shuffled up the rushes too." "These women can let nothing stand as they find it," he growls. Mistress Polish is another case in point.[267]

[263] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[264] *Monsieur D'Olive,* 2, 1.
[265] *The City Match,* 5, 1.
[266] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 3, 2.
[267] *The Magnetic Lady,* 1, 1.

Though eventually proved to be no Puritan, she has won her way to confidence by posing as one, and so bold is she in her self-righteousness that Palate's admonition that she 'hear her betters speak' fails to make any impression, as do the repeated insults to her volubility. A better picture of the egotism and self-complacency of the uncultured person can scarcely be found. On the other hand, Oliver's refusal to follow the conventions has some justification, for this rebellious man has been hustled into the presence of his enemies and berated for his ill manners in refusing to "stoop for grace." [268] Who possesses the lesser courtesy is hard to determine, but at any rate he tells his captors that he was born but to stoop to his loom, and since they have seized upon that his stooping days are over.

The Puritan has always been known as a straightforward, outspoken man. But to say, as does Hallam, that "hypocritical adulation was so much among the vices of that age, that the want of it passed for rudeness," [269] is to justify, so far as the Puritan is concerned, too many unlovely traits. Even the ardent Neal admits that the early Puritans were often "too stiff and rigid in their behaviour . . . and their language to their superiors the bishops was not always decent and mannerly." But he qualifies this criticism at once with "Oppression maketh wise men mad." [270] It will be remembered that Lipsalve lists "speaking reverently of the clergy" as one of his two "notorious crimes," [271] and Mistress Polish declares that she respects "no persons, chaplains, or doctors." [272] But at another time Jonson is not joking when he condemns the "covetise and rage" of certain Puritan disputants:[273] and there is an element of truth beneath the shocking wit of one of Randolph's paragraphs concerning a point of false doctrine and a "long-winded puritan," who "hates unity and church discipline so far, that you cannot tie a true love's-knot on him." [274] "Certain pills of sound doctrine" [275] are said to have purged the ill humours of one man but in the majority of cases it was religious disputes which aroused rather than cured ill will. If the

[268] *Mayor of Quinborough*, 5, 1.
[269] *Constitutional History of England*, 1, p. 278.
[270] Preface to vol. 2, p. 15.
[271] *Family of Love*, 4, 1.
[272] *Magnetic Lady*, 1, 1.
[273] *The Sad Shepherd*, 1, 1.
[274] *The Conceited Peddler*, p. 42.
[275] *A Fine Companion*, 5, 2.

Puritan could have been as moderate in his speech and religious attitudes as he was abstemious in his physical habits he would have avoided much of the persecution and still more of the sarcasm heaped upon him.

Aside from doctrinal disputes there is that ill-humoured, contentious side to the Puritan's nature which well deserved the ridicule that it received. Busy exemplifies this crotchety nature when he declares he will eat pork if for no other reason than to show he hates the Jews:[276] and another Puritan "so cavils and wrangles with any man that he deals withall, that they never agree or love after, and yet every Saturday he makes even with all the world." [277] The Puritan did not always give particular heed to the severe Biblical injunction regarding amicable relationships, and it is evident that he was then, as are the members of various strict sects of today, noted for his shrewdness in driving a hard bargain. "Stiffly, as a Puritan does contention" is the way one rogue says he will maintain his integrity.[278] Behind the backs of some Puritan women congratulating themselves for their congeniality an acquaintance reminds the audience that their words are but a cover for their strife.[279] There is a similar situation in *Covent Garden Weeded.* Devout Gabriel and irreverent Mihil are discussing the wrong done their cousin, Mihil pleading for mercy for the offender and Gabriel contending that he should be humbled by law or by hand. "By your own right hand you might have smote him," Gabriel argues, "smote him with great force, yea smote him unto the earth, until he had prayed that the evil might be taken from him." In an 'aside' Mihil confides to the audience: "This is their way of loving enemies, to beat 'em into goodness." [280] In one or two more instances the dramatists imply that greater violence than that displayed in wrangling might be expected from the Puritans. Cokes tells his companions that though Busy "be no man of the fist, he has friends that will to cuffs for him," [281] and surely none but Puritans could have been numbered among the friends of this man. Our credulity is taxed by

[276] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[277] *Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fools,* 1, 1.
[278] *Women Beware Women,* 3, 3.
[279] *Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 2, 4.
[280] 4, 2.
[281] *Bartholomew Fair,* 5, 3.

Mistress Chremylus' account of how a group of these fanatics beset her on the street. Only because they had scruples against the Popish figures of her cakes did the contents of her basket remain intact.[282] The truth probably lies midway between the exaggeration of this incident and the claim of the Puritan that he was sadly maligned. So much evidence of his quarrelsome nature would indicate that he was as prone to go out of his way to meet trouble as were his critics happy to picture him embroiled in it.

It is undoubtedly true that the lowly estate of many Dissenters was a contributing factor in unfair appraisals of them. Frequently, Puritans are as conspicuous for their poverty as for their undue zeal, their contentious spirit, or any other of their objectionable traits, and can be identified by their impecunious state only a little less readily than by their ignorance and crudeness. In one of Massinger's plays, a character enters in "tattered apparel," a companion speaks of his "Plymouth cloak," [283] and the image is evidently complete for the audience. The men who apprehend Oliver debate as to whether or not they should burn the sixteen yards of heretic fustian, "worn threadbare," which they have seized with his loom.[284] In jolly mood, Chremylus states that in the days of his folly he was a "just, precise, and honest man"; a "precisian," according to his friends. As an afterthought, Chremylus adds—"by natural consequence, very poor." [285] Valentine defends his attire with a play on Puritan poverty, stating that he will "maintain" his "Christian breeches, founded in Blackfriars." [286] But it is Goggle who is the walking example of the poverty-stricken Puritan, and it is no wonder that his dreams foretold that he should be "rich and happy made by Revelation." [287] *The City Match* gives us more details regarding the economic status of dissenting groups. There we read that

> Since amulets, and bracelets,
> And love-locks were in use, the price of sprats,
> Jerusalem artichokes, and Holland cheese,
> Is very much increased; so that the brethren,

[282] *Hey for Honesty*, 3, 3.
[283] *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 1, 1.
[284] *Mayor of Quinborough*, 5, 1.
[285] *Hey for Honesty*, 1, 1.
[286] *Wit Without Money*, 3, 2.
[287] *Hey for Honesty*, 4, 1.

> Botchers I mean, and such poor zealous saints
> As earn five groats a week under a stall,
> By singing psalms, and drawing up of holes,
> Can't live in their vocation.[288]

Though stage Puritans were habitually pictured as poverty-stricken folks history does not confirm the charge, but tells us that most often the Puritan was a thrifty, hardworking individual, who because of his frugality and abstemiousness came to be possessed of rather more than the average share of this world's goods and was on the whole a substantial citizen among the middle and working classes of English society. Certainly the Separatist groups which came to America soon gave evidence of the strain of prosperity in their veins. But even in the dramas, one or two indirect statements indicate that Dissenters were among those in comfortable circumstances. To Mistress Purge Middleton does not attach the burden of poverty, and we read that she has a servant, whom, incidentally, she does not treat in a manner befitting her pious protestations. The deceased husband of Widow Plus had been a well-to-do Puritan who had kept servants and had been accustomed to feasting his guests.[289]

The fact that the Puritans were self-denying in their mode of life but did not always forbid themselves the luxury of making their temperance conspicuous was partially responsible for the accusation of gluttony so frequently made against them. People so poor as they are pictured to have been could not very consistently have been in the habit of feasting to excess. Once we are told that the possibility of obtaining mercy for a certain widow is as remote as the probability that "a Puritan has a good feast." [290] This is likely to be nearer the truth than the examples which are to follow. However, it is safe to say that indolence and greediness must have prevailed far more among other Elizabethans than among those who, above all things, upheld the virtue of moderation. In real life Puritans were neither paupers nor gluttons. Belonging to the humble, hardworking class, and circumscribed by conscience, their pleasures were the most simple and meager imaginable. Shunning worldly companions

[288] *The City Match,* 2, 1.
[289] *The Puritan,* 2, 1.
[290] *The Honest Lawyer,* act 4.

and amusements, they probably did cultivate among themselves, even to an unusual degree, the virtues of friendliness and hospitality. This would seem to be one thing which the dramatists might commend, but not so. In the most unfavorable circumstances Mistress Polish dotes upon a "godly couple" who "feasted all the neighbours",[291] and Morose is warned about having to "feast all the silenced brethren, once in three days" if he marries a "precise" woman.[292] Similarly, the brethren's fondness for feasting together is noted in at least two other plays.[293]

Proberio's description of "a man of most pure profession and invention not ordinary" adds laziness to these other charges. "Imprimus, when he liveth in a corner over the kitchen, because the Jack shall not whirl too often to waken or distract him in prayer. His dinners are for the most part ordinary, except four days in the week he visits his house-keeping friends. And at supper a couple of eggs, and a bit of cheese is a choice diet after a liberal dinner: besides it saves fire and washing of dishes." [294] Middleton hints that Mistress Purge has the same fault, when not even an exercise of the Family can call her from her "soft pillow." [295] Nothing, however, is able to please those who wish to find fault. Dorcas, the "rank Puritan" whom Mayne depicts, receives only greater scorn from this dramatist when she goes to the opposite extreme, loves retirement, must have time for devotion, and cannot abide company nor the "vanity of visits." [296]

More commonly, as in Marston's play, is "gluttony" and "a Puritan" the comparison.[297] Nevergood implies the same when he says that if he changes his faith he "will turn fat Presbyter or Anabaptist." [298] Parson Palate, though no Puritan by doctrine, is forced to endure satire with the rest of the sectaries in those points which they have in common. Needle says that he has "an edifying stomach, and a persuading palate, like his name."[299] The Puritan is more

[291] *The Magnetic Lady,* 1, 1.
[292] *The Silent Woman,* 2, 1.
[293] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1; *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 3, 2.
[294] *Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fools,* 1, 1.
[295] *Family of Love,* 2, 1.
[296] *The City Match,* 4, 8.
[297] *The Malcontent,* 5, 3.
[298] *Hey for Honesty,* 4, 1.
[299] *Magnetic Lady,* 3, 1.

specifically bantered for his seemingly well-known fondness for capon. A character in *Ram Alley* makes fun of the sharp and long puritan nose which "with ease can smell an edifying capon some few streets off" [300] and *The City Match* tells of a Puritan schoolmaster who "sooner eats a capon, than blesses it." [301] Likewise a clown in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays remarks that his belief is "like a Puritan's on Good-Friday, too high-fed with capon." [302] These two dramatists, though out of sympathy with the Puritans for reasons far other than their personal eccentricities, nevertheless take occasion to jibe them twice more for this matter of self indulgence. Penurio is certain that "plum porridge" and a "full loin of veal, well sauc'd and roasted" will entice a Puritan;[303] and Jacques declares that in payment for a wife he would give "full as many prayers as the most zealous Puritan conceives out of the meditation of fat veal, or birds of prey, cream'd capons, against players, and to as good a tune." [304] Fletcher, in a burst of rage at the Puritans for their repressive efforts, bluntly calls them, "capon-worshippers." [305]

Middleton brings to the stage some ill-mannered Puritan gossips reveling in a christening scene spoken of above in connection with rudeness. The remarks of Allwit the host regarding their voracious appetites throw light upon his own poor taste as well as unsparingly condemn his guests. He tells how they pocket and "lurch" for all the dainties and 'cull out all the long plums' until none "worth mouthing" are left. These women have no "consciences at sweetmeats," he declares as he watches one of them serve herself for the third time and then offer the excuse that she has "forgot a sister's child that's sick." [306]

This is the only dramatist who displays his gluttonous Puritans upon the stage, but indirectly we hear of others, among them the minister who has been seen to "eat a whole pig, and afterwards fall to the pettitoes." [307] Jonson spares us the sight of Busy making a

[300] Dodsley, vol. 10, p. 279.
[301] 2, 1.
[302] *The Fair Maid of the Inn,* 4, 2.
[303] *Women Pleased,* 3, 2.
[304] *The Woman's Prize,* 3, 2.
[305] *Wild Goose Chase,* 1, 2.
[306] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 3, 2.
[307] *The Puritan,* 1, 3.

glutton of himself, although the picture of him which Littlewit draws for Dame Purecraft is sufficiently realistic. He tells her that Busy will appear as soon as he has cleansed his beard, then adds: "I found him fast by the teeth in the cold Turkey-pie in the cupboard, with a great white loaf on his left hand, and a glass of Malmsey on his right." [308] It is therefore no wonder that when the Puritans are known to be approaching the booths, Knockem makes the hurried estimate of "two to a pig" [309] as indicating what preparations he thinks would be about right.

It is this same gormandizing Busy who is soon to further enhance his reputation by greater feats of eating and drinking. Yet his own words condemn him: "bottle-ale is a drink of Satan's, a diet drink of Satan's, devised to puff us up, and make us swell in this latter age of vanity." [310] Busy's fondness for spirits does not reach a state of depravity, but it is significant that Knockem orders "half a dozen of the biggest bottles" to be brought out for the zealots who visit the Fair. Ursula, however, remarks as she sees them coming that "they look as they would not drink all two penn'orth of bottle-ale amongst 'em." [311] These are not the only weak sinners who fall into temptation almost while preaching sobriety and temperance, for other writers give the impression that a love of intoxicants was a common vice among Puritans. We read about the parson who "rails against players mightily because they brought him drunk upon the stage once—as he will be horribly drunk." [312] In a play by William Sampson a certain character, Joshua by name, says he has a prisoner, an Anabaptist, whom he must convert, and the Miller replies: "It must be in's drink then, else he's none o' the right brethren." Yet Ball says concerning Joshua that "by the virtue of his good liquor he's able to convert any Brownistical sister," and Joshua rejoices to add: "I was converted in my drink, and so are most of the brethren." [313] Glapthorne also speaks of the Puritans as bibblers and rogues but their tippling is made incidental to their villainy. "Precise Tailors," they are, "that do sit in zeal and swear cudsnigs over

[308] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[309] *Ibid.,* 3, 2.
[310] *Ibid.,* 3, 1.
[311] *Ibid.,* 3, 2.
[312] *The Puritan,* 1, 2.
[313] *The Vow Breaker,* 1, 1; *Ibid.,* 5, 1.

their wine, to cheat their customers." [314] Randolph's *Aristippus*, a one-act piece of drollery which expatiates upon the joys and abuses of the cup, brings upon the stage "the Wild man! a zealous brother," concerning whom the jovial philosopher is startled into asking: "What a coil's here! what fellow's that? he looks like a mad hogs-head of Marchbeer that had run out, and threatened a deluge. What's he?" According to 'two scholars' he is one who "stands up against the persecution of barley-broth, and will maintain a degree above the reputation of aqua vitae," and who has been heard "swear by his hora octava, that sack and Rosa solis is but water-gruel to it." [315] The vehemence of this strange brother is the only quality which could link him with the 'faithful,' the irony of his ardent espousal of spirits, moreover, being the only reason for the fleeting bit of nonsense.

Middleton does not hesitate to actually bring Puritan drunkards upon the stage. The gluttonous women of one familiar scene climax their dissipations by imbibing too freely of the christening wine, to the further concern and disgust of their host. The wine loosens a line of gossip which not even friendship could accomplish; it also deprives at least one sister of her dignity, but being raised up she piously excuses herself: " 'Tis but the common affliction of the faithful; we must embrace our falls." [316] Brome's caricature of the drunken Gabriel, though more lengthy and detailed, is scarcely so repugnant as Middleton's picture of the maudlin women. Gabriel's pretensions to godliness and his loud denunciations of the noise and revelry at the tavern provide an effective contrast for his later defections. "Such cries as these," he says, "went forth before the desolation of the Great City. O profane tinkling the cymbals of Satan, that tickle the ear, with vanity, to lift up the mind to lewdness. Mine ears shall be that of the Adder against the Song of the Serpent . . . I will roar out aloud to drown your incantations. Yea, I will set out a threat even as the beast that belloweth." [317] If well acted, the part of Gabriel in act four may be a merry take-off of a drunken man, but as a picture of a Puritan it is too overdrawn to

[314] *Wit in a Constable*, 5, 1.
[315] *Aristippus*, p. 11.
[316] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, 3, 2.
[317] *Covent Garden Weeded*, 2, 2.

be effective. Mihil indulges in various sallies against the giddy-brained Puritans whose heads are so full of whimsies that they can bear but little wine, and he proceeds to demonstrate this point by leading Gabriel from error to excess until that poor, weak brother is entirely overcome by the "Jesuitical fumes." In the early stage of his inebriation Gabriel agrees with Mihil that "wine in itself is good . . . though the excess he nought," and that "Taverns are not contemptible, so that company be good." As to taverns, the Puritan's stand was scarcely so liberal, but as regards wine and ale, even to the most strict the enjoyment of these did not loom as a vice unless carried to excess. Jonson satirizes his Puritan matron for her love of discussions and her constant quoting from Knox, rather than because she moderates these habits "with a cup of wine ever and anon." [318] Master Prynne was declared to mortify the flesh by retiring for long periods to write and study, relieved only occasionally by draughts of ale. So the Puritan at that time was not so rabidly opposed to stimulants as to account for his being burlesqued as a tippler. The more modern emphasis put upon this matter is not to be confused with the Elizabethan attitude. Then it was merely the sight of a straight-laced, reproving sort of person falling prey to one weakness of the flesh, which two or three dramatists considered a legitimate means of mirth and entertainment.

Perforce, a different attitude is found in the satire of the Puritan's very real loathing for tobacco. He is never caricatured for any vacillation in this particular and his hatred for the weed was well enough understood to be the target for some well-put raillery. There is Busy's clever twist about the smoke of tobacco being devised to "keep us in mist and error," [319] and Mistress Mulligrub's assertion that she could never endure this ungodly tobacco since one of the elders assured her, upon his knowledge, that it was not used in the congregation of the family of love.[320] Overdue, though no Puritan, but satirized as one because he is one of the despised city magistrates, abhors tobacco and elaborates upon its evils and the ills awaiting "some tobacco-takers." [321] Simplicity, "a Puritan," who plays opposite

[318] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[319] *Bartholomew Fair,* 3, 1.
[320] *The Dutch Courtesan,* 3, 3.
[321] *Bartholomew Fair,* 2, 6.

Deceit in one of Middleton's masques, has evidently scorned Deceit's offer of a pipe with such vigor that he is impelled to retort to Simplicity's "truth and bluntness," "I think some serpent, sure, hath licked him over." [322]

The sudden and very great popularity of tobacco in this age made it an interesting topic for discussion, whether relating to the Puritan aversion or not. Many besides Puritans denounced the habit. King James' "Counterblast to Tobacco," 1604, was certainly written with no intention of supporting the Puritan prejudice, no matter how much humour the analogy has since provoked. Tobacco was enjoyed at the playhouses and taverns, and smoking in graceful fashion was regarded by fops and gallants as a necessary accomplishment. Jonson writes some excellent nonsense about the fad,[323] and various allusions in the plays of other dramatists show that many were interested in the new 'art.' "Then let him show his several tricks in taking the whiffle, the ring, etc., for these are compliments that gain gentlemen no mean respect; and for which indeed they are more worthily noticed than for any skill they have in learning." [324] Then too, the price of tobacco limited its excessive use to those of some little means.[325] Ursula sells it for "three pence a pipeful" and then it is adulterated with "Coltsfoot", "to itch it out." [326] Small wonder it is that the frugal abstemious man should have denounced a habit which was then so obviously a luxury and a cultivated fad of those who frequented places he could not and would not.

The conflict between these views is best set forth by Chapman, whose gay Monsieur D'Olive indulges in a lengthy eulogy of the weed, his praise being preceded by some well-appointed mirth at the expense of the sectaries. D'Olive's question is: "whether in an Aristocratic or in a Democriticall estate tobacco might be brought to lawful use," and he comes to the point by describing Upstart a weaver, "a most hot liver'd enemy to Tobacco." This fierce little man, who has eaten garlic as a defense against ill air and to make his speeches savory, has on that very same morning inveighed against tobacco:

[322] *A World Tost at Tennis,* vol, 7, 173.
[323] *Every Man Out of His Humour,* 3, 1.
[324] Jonson's Works, v. 1, p. 99—cited from "Gull's Hornbook."
[325] See Alden, pp. 180-182.
[326] *Bartholomew Fair,* 2, 2.

Said 'twas a pagan plant, a profane weed
And a most sinful smoke, that had no warrant
Out of the word; invented sure by Satan
In these our latter days, to cast a mist
Before men's eyes, that they might not behold
The grossness of old superstition
Which is as 'twere deriv'd into the church
From the foul sink of Romish popery
And that it was a judgment on our land
That the substantial commodities:
And mighty blessings of this realm of France
Bells, rattles, hobby horses and such like
Which have brought us so much wealth into the land
Should now be changed into the smoke of vanity
The smoke of superstition.[327]

Upstart holds that a garlic clove is more sanctified and edifying than profane tobacco which he calls a "rag of Popery", and desires to see it banished from the land. He closes his interview, according to D'Olive, by wiping his mouth with his handkerchief and turning his noise to the old strain as if he were preparing for a new exercise.

Chapman has here added some stock flourishes to his picture of the precise weaver, but in essence the satire upon this subject is correct, for strict Puritans felt quite as strongly and it is conceivable that they may have spoken as unreasonably as Upstart. To the hearty, joy-loving dramatists this prejudice was just so much folly. Some of them were dangling these very men before their audiences as gluttons and drunkards, and though they must have well understood the injustice of these accusations their ill-will was in no sense mollified by such a vociferous intolerance of a much lesser evil. They did not necessarily imply that the Puritan was a hypocrite but they did intend to show that this rigid sanctimonious man was not so impervious to evil but that he too could fall a prey to some of the common weaknesses of human nature.

The Puritan may sometimes have merited the suspicion that he was proud of his own humility. Certainly the dramatists were convinced that this was one of his faults for there is not a Puritan on the stage who does not boast of his godliness. Mistress Purge characterizes her sect as the "goodliest people that ever turned up the

[327] Monsieur D'Olive, 2, 1.

white o' th' eye,"[328] and Mistress Flowerdew is amazed that stage folk flock to Blackfriars and "dare roost themselves there in the midst of us, so many good and well-disposed persons."[329] Two other women of the sect are overheard bragging about how they "love lowliness."[330] Such a holier-than-thou attitude naturally built a wall about itself. When D'Olive asserts that his inspired Weaver "wore one ear shorter than t'other for a difference,"[331] he is stretching the point and making wit out of a barbarous practice, but he is also laying his finger upon a bit of human frailty not uncommon among those who, in any generation, pose as 'different.' Setting themselves apart by peculiarities of manner and dress was a trait of even the earliest sectaries. In *New Custom,* Ignorance holds up to scorn the young preacher with gathered frock, polled head, broad hat, unshaved beard and pale face.[332]

The theatre in any age can scarcely boast of more legitimate objects of satire than these queer religious-minded Elizabethans. Their scruples were made laughable by their very novelty to the average Englishman, and the dramatists took keen delight in ferreting out all of the Puritans' singularities and in exposing their efforts at self-justification. In this, Jonson, is past master, though others also can ridicule these inconsistencies with much cleverness. Busy, utterly oblivious to the pride he feels in his own shorn state, deplores long hair as an "ensign of pride, a banner"; Knockem, though with no intention of doing so, threatens to turn Puritan by leaving his vapours and cutting his hair.[333] Jonson means the Puritans when he speaks of those who have "religion in their garments, and their hair cut shorter than their eyebrows."[334] Just so is the image of a Puritan called to mind when Quicksilver, following his penitence, is said to have had his hair cut.[335] The later appellation of "Roundhead" came from the Puritan's insistence upon closely cropped hair, which singularity in that day of elaborate coiffures distinguished him with a vengeance. Even though Roundheads came to be very numerous they

[328] *The Family of Love,* 3, 3.
[329] *Muse's Looking Glass,* 1, 1.
[330] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 2, 4.
[331] *Monsieur D'Olive,* 2, 1.
[332] 1, 1.
[333] *Bartholomew Fair,* 3, 1.
[334] *Every Man Out of His Humour,* Induction.
[335] *Eastward Ho,* Act 5.

did not cease to be oddities. We find that Peter Hausted derides the Precisian of his own late decade much after the early manner. "My Tube with the short hair and long ears, my formal outsides, that look demure and snuffle" is his description.[336] Frequently the Puritan was satirized for his absurd mannerisms such as turning up the eye, speaking in the nose, drawing sighs and railing. All of these and more does Aurelia recall when she tells how Dorcas has tortured her.[337] 'Rolling the eyes' was the peculiarity most popular—probably because of the opportunity it gave the actor. One of the tid-bits which a devil calls for at his gruesome feasts is "a puritan poacht, that used to turn up the eggs of his eyes." [338] In *The Fleire* we even hear about a Puritan who was damned "for saying grace without turning up the white of his eyes." [339] As to speaking in the nose, one worldly wag assures his companion that they can agree very well, since each speaks "i' th' nose," one out of humility of the spirit, the other from wantonness of the flesh.[340] In *The Country Innocence,* the Captain inquires how Bab came to "speak in her nose so" and is informed by Mr. Will that it is "the tone of the Brethren." [341]

Some of the sectaries flaunted religion in their names as well as "in their garments." The practice of this form of characterization had been brought to perfection in the English Moralities, but Elizabethan dramatists found fresh material in the custom which prevailed among pious people. Subtle analyzes the motives that influence some to call themselves:

> By names of Tribulation, Persecution,
> Restraint, Long-patience, and such like, affected
> By the whole family or wood of you,
> Only for glory, or to catch the ear
> Of the disciple.[342]

In the first scene of *Bartholomew Fair* Jonson derides those who would change "Winifred" to "Win-the-fight," but in his earlier play

[336] Preface to *Rival Friends.*
[337] *City Match,* 2, 1.
[338] *The Gipsies Metamorphosed, vol.* 3, 156.
[339] Act 5.
[340] *Covent Garden Weeded,* 4, 2.
[341] Act 5.
[342] *The Alchemist,* 3, 2.

he has more than matched their zeal with his "Ananias," a misnomer for the sect but not for the rogue he so names. Other names are "precise Scrivener" and "Hugo Obligation" in *The Rival Friends;* "Simplicity—a Puritan" in *A World Tost at Tennis;* "Dorcas," who is later known as "Susan," in *The City Match;* the "vile" but happily named "Martext" in *As You Like It,* and "Hope-on-high Bomby" in *Women Pleased.*

Not only were the Puritans conspicuous for an assumed humility and for affected mannerisms, but if we take the dramatists' word for it they were also to be recognized by their glum and bitter countenances. By its very nature, this characteristic calls forth a caustic wit. "Set my countenance like a precisian" is Marlowe's terse, and, for the early date at which *Doctor Faustus* was written, illuminating comment.[343] To this more subtle form of satire Jonson contributes one of the most biting remarks. Referring to the set face of a gentlewoman who looks as though she were going to a sacrifice, an observer remarks: "O, she is the extraction of a dozen of Puritans, for a look." [344] Judith, in *Westward Ho,* thus most ungraciously reproves her companion—"I shall love a puritan's face the worst whilst I live for that copy of thy countenance." [345] Nor is it difficult to imagine what is meant when a luckless fellow is told that he looks as if he were plotting "the calling in o' th' Declaration, or the abolishing o' th' common prayers." [346] Heywood is more specific though less witty, wondering why some youngsters sit like puritans with "never a jest abroad to make them laugh." [347] Andrew, in that delightful comedy *The Elder Brother,* listens to a song and concludes—"this was never penned at Geneva; the note's too sprightly." [348] In one of Middleton's plays a courtesan bids music "be not a puritan," [349] while another character speaks of a goldfinch "that with sweet notes flies and wakes the dull eye even of a Puritan." [350]

The Puritan's sour 'look' and grave demeanor was but one expression of his supposedly morose existence; he seems even to have

[343] Scene 2.
[344] *Cynthia's Revels,* 4, 1.
[345] 2, 1.
[346] *The Ordinary,* 1, 1.
[347] *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad,* 3, 3.
[348] 4, 4.
[349] *Blurt Master Constable,* 5, 2.
[350] *Ibid.,* 4, 1.

taken pride in a drab and often dowdy appearance. Chapman notes this peculiarity in Florilla.[351] "She goes more like a milkmaid than a Countess, for all her youth and beauty," laments an admirer; her husband makes use of the same expression in his sore vexation, and would persuade her to wear jewels and a velvet hood since Heaven itself has provided these ornaments and religion admits a difference in the estates of men. In all other matters save this he is able to persuade her of her folly. Such piety may have proceeded from an admirable simplicity but to the dramatist it was mere affectation and utterly incomprehensible.

The rigid Puritan not only regulated his own life according to conscience but he felt it his duty to warn those who were proud and worldly-minded. Stupido hates all rhymers for their "diabolical ruffs and wicked great-breeches full of sin;" [352] and Ananias rebukes Surly for his "lewd, superstitious, and idolatrous breeches," for the ruffs of pride about his neck, and for his lewd hat which makes him look like the Antichrist.[353] Dorcas is certain that the German war and the late persecutions can be ascribed to curling, false teeth, and oil of Talc.[354] This state of mind explains why this "rank Puritan" must always preach her mistress a sermon before dressing her; must prove the lawfulness of curling irons; show the text for the fashion of gowns; show where jewels are commanded, or what lady in primitive times wore ropes of pearl or rubies, and urge that counsels be called to permit the wearing of a little ruff.[355] It is not revealed that Dorcas refused to serve her mistress; nor did others of the brethren at Blackfriars cease to ply their profitable trade "with their perukes, and their puffs, their fans, and their huffs." [356] Bird is half boastful about having the theatre-goers' custom for all their feathers, but Mistress Flowerdew admits that it 'something pricks her conscience' to sell them pins and looking-glasses.[357] But it remains for Jonson's Robin Goodfellow to blend fun and moralizing and give the perfect answer to the whole question: "Now there was nothing

[351] *An Humourous Day's Mirth,* pp. 54, 57, 58.
[352] *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus,* Act. 3.
[353] *The Alchemist,* 4, 1.
[354] *The City Match,* 2, 1.
[355] *The City Match,* 2, 2.
[356] *Bartholomew Fair,* 5, 3.
[357] *Muse's Looking Glass,* 1, 1.

left for me that I could presently think on, but a feather-maker of Blackfriars, and in that shape I told them surely I must come in . . . but they all made light of me as of my feather; and wondered how I could be a Puritan, being of so vain a vocation. I answered, we are all masquers sometimes." [358]

Thus the dramatists were even more eager to find the weak spot in the Puritan's armor than to mimic his true piety. They go still farther and show that some Puritans harbor the very weaknesses they condemn. Mistress Purge, for instance, makes herself ridiculous in her concern for her ruff,[359] and there are other times when with a jest this most extreme Elizabethan style is associated with the severely plain Puritan. One observer of Puritans at the great Fair felt that by "their small printed ruffs" their characters could be read;[360] and a servant laughs at the absurdity of a Puritan's ruff, starched in print, being "turned to paper and a play writ in it." [361] Some Puritans evidently considered starched clothes a mark of vanity and the matter must have occasioned some discussion among the brethren, for Jonson speaks of the scrupulous folk quibbling as to whether "matrons of the holy assembly may let their hair out, or wear doublets, or have that idle starch about their linen." [362]

The Puritans of this century were no more the exception to the rule than have the suppressors of normal instincts found themselves to be in any age. When they set out to reform the worldliness of others they found in their own household many who were unable or unwilling to obey the rules. It is quite possible that some extreme sectaries honestly condemned the vagaries of fashion with the harshness of an Ananias and the relentlessness of a Dorcas. But it is just as believable that others, with clear consciences, wore their "short fizzing little shittle-cork heels;" [363] or, like Bird, sincerely lamented that Puritans could not keep their wives finer than others

[358] *Love Restored,* vol. 3, pp. 84-5.
[359] *Family of Love,* 3, 3.
[360] *Bartholomew Fair,* 3, 2.
[361] *The Night Walker,* 3, 4.
[362] *The Alchemist,* 3, 2. Campbell says that it was from Netherland refugees that English women first learned to starch their clothes. About 1564 a thrifty Dutchwoman was said to have "taught starching in those days of impurity." Campbell; *The Puritan,* vol. 1, p. 237, in a note cited from "an old writer."
[363] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 3, 2.

lest they be satirized by their enemies.[364] Jonson, Randolph, Middleton and others have undoubtedly exaggerated the disparity between the belief and the practice of these Puritans but in exposing these common weaknesses they have provided some excellent fun.

In the final analysis, it was the Puritan's pettiness and preciseness which so irritated his contemporaries. Heywood expresses this feeling toward him when one of his characters, expatiating upon sin as a clog unto the soul, is told that he talks "too like a Puritan." [365] A dramatist of Chapman's disposition could advance the Puritan's pretensions with an easy though serious sort of mockery; Jonson could laugh at him and then expose him with overwhelming contempt; but there were others who could discern in this peculiar person scarcely a grim humour and from whose pens came such well-calculated phrases as "fine precise fiends" [366] and "stubborn precise puppies." [367] No less a dislike actuates Field to dub the young coxcomb of his play a "precise and learned Princox." [368] Thomas Jordan too feels the same when he recalls, in passing, the "precise constable . . . brother o' th' Family, that sent the musicians to prison." [369] He is remembering the strong and dangerous arm which could be wielded by this dangerous man. However, the word 'precise' did not always have the same connotation. Precise people were also thought of as more or less harmlessly irritating and meticulous persons. No stage Puritan better illustrates this more gentle meaning of the term than the inspired Dorcas. Her mistress tells how she injects her religion even into the culinary art. The Acts and Monuments are made in sweetbreads; quinces are arranged and burned at the stake; banquets are persecutions. As to Sewing:

> She works religious petticoats; for flowers
> She'll make church-histories. Her needle doth
> So sanctify my cushionets; besides,
> My smock-sleeves have such holy embroideries,
> And are so learned, that I fear in time
> All my apparel will be quoted by
> Some pure instructor.[370]

[364] *Muse's Looking Glass,* 1, 1.
[365] *A Woman Killed with Kindness,* 4, 3.
[366] *The Temple of Love* (a masque).
[367] *The Wild Goose Chase,* 1, 2.
[368] *Amends for Ladies,* 3, 2.
[369] *Walks of Islington and Hogsdon,* 4, 2.
[370] *The City Match,* 2, 2.

And then comes the story of Dorcas accompanying her mistress to the house of a lady who has a parrot. While the ladies chat, Dorcas converts the fowl until it can speak "nought but Knox's works" and so is a "parrot lost." It is Dorcas too who is so modest that certain words shame her, that other figures make her do penance, and that she maintains kissing to be as evil as the worst license.[371] This is unique, as Puritan women are habitually made conspicuous for their lack of modesty. It is Mayne's intention to produce a laugh at the expense of some falsely modest 'sister'; on the contrary, he pays the precise woman a neat compliment.

Being precise had its admirable as well as its humourous and unlovely side. No matter how Jonson jests about Busy being so narrow-minded as to give up his trade of baker because his cakes were served at "brideales, maypoles, morrices, and such profane feasts and meetings," [372] there remains the fact that he did give up his trade and that Jonson probably saw other scrupulous people suffering to the same extent for their convictions. Middleton's picture of Oliver being torn from his loom and subjected to outrageous treatment,[373] without once yielding, is another indication of what was happening and of how the precise, unrelenting man of that day met the situation. Seriousness of conviction and tenacity of purpose are qualities which the enemies of these men were unwilling to recognize in anything but a satiric way. But it is well to remember that the good in the Puritan's nature was too often obscured by his harsh exterior and by his petty, precise modes of thought and action. Scrupulously eager to do only what he regarded as right he none the less stands as an illustration of one of life's little ironies, for he turned his virtues into vices by overdeveloping them and his good into evil by overdoing it. In a practical sense, he thus often defeated his own purposes. Many reforms accomplished by the movements he started have survived, but the great majority of Englishmen have never adopted either the scruples or the principles of Puritanism.

Particularly bitter and for the most part unjust is the body of satire which reviles the Puritan as a hypocrite. Few caricatures of any length are without either some innocent, jesting exposure of the

[371] *Ibid.*, 4, 5.
[372] *Bartholomew Fair*, 1, 1.
[373] *Mayor of Quinborough*, 5, 1.

more trivial aspects of hypocrisy, such as Chapman or Randolph were wont to make or a deliberate unmasking of deceit, such as that which distinguishes all of Jonson's Puritan characters and many others of his not at all of that persuasion. The conversation between a pedler and an artificer in Robert Wilson's play affords an early and interesting commentary on the sham which was believed to thrive among those holding dissenting opinions.

PEDLER:

O holy Gospel, O tidings of health most pure,
Thou art made a cloak of all abomination.
Vengeance hangeth over your head by you sure,
For misusing the word of man's salvation,
What mischief and outrage hath been wrought,
And that under the pretence of the Gospel,
There is no heresy, no impiety, no sacrilege on sought,
And all painted out, with the color of the Gospel.

ARTIFICER:

Of the Gospel we do boast, and do it profess,
But more honest fidelity is among Turks,
O the boasting, the pride, and the fleshly excess,
Among us is neither true faith, nor yet good works.[374]

The very first stage Puritan [375] is a thorough-going hypocrite and knave, but his baseness is no match for the sheer despicableness of Languebeau Snuffle's [376] hypocrisy. There is a world of difference between Snuffle's shamelessness and the more or less innocent self-deception of such pretentious people as Florilla,[377] Bird and Mistress Flowerdew,[378] or Goggle.[379] In between these two extremes are the dissemblers, hypocrites and cheats whom Jonson believed to be representative of the Puritans. Of these, Busy is the true hypocrite, the one who seeks not merely to gloss over his vices but to gain credit for virtues which he does not possess. Ananias and Tribulation are of that considerable company generally rated as imposters—probably better described as cheats, since they are of the more inferior and mercenary class endeavoring to make something out of those they

[374] *The Pedler's Prophecy,* 11, 908-19.
[375] *A Knack to Know a Knave.*
[376] *The Atheist's Tragedy.*
[377] *An Humourous Day's Mirth.*
[378] *Muse's Looking Glass.*
[379] *Hey for Honesty.*

deceive. 'Hypocrite' is the all-inclusive and the most comprehensive term applicable to all these persons, and it can best be observed in the more detailed character studies of part three of this discussion.

However, incidents and allusions found in Elizabethan plays of every type add support to this charge of hypocrisy. Of the greater dramatists, only Shakespeare and Massinger do not stoop to this more serious accusation. This bespeaks a more prejudiced state of mind than that which led the dramatists constantly to berate the Puritans for their precise and intolerant attitudes. So deeply is this belief in the essential hypocrisy of the Puritan embedded in the minds of the dramatists that the word 'Puritan' is regarded as a synonym of 'hypocrite' while 'puritanically' is used in place of 'deceitfully' with apparent unconcern and with a freedom which presupposes instant comprehension on the part of the Elizabethan audience. Tourneur thus uses the word in *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Here the setting of the corrupt Italian court gives added significance to Spurio's vengeful use of the word:

> I'll after him
> And know his trespasses; seem to bear a part
> In all his ills, but with a puritan heart.[380]

Likewise, in *Northward Ho,* we find the expression "puritanical coyness," [381] as well as the explanation that "she would do it so puritanically, so secretly I mean, that nobody could hear of it." [382] In the same play it is asserted very emphatically that one cannot know "an hypocritical Puritan from a devout Christian if you go by the face." [383]

Heywood is not satisfied to call Timothy "hypocrite and knave" but styles him a "puritanical" one.[384] Timothy resembles the knavish 'priest' of the earlier day. He piously receives John, who has been sent to borrow money; questions him about his beliefs; and assiduously probes his honest sentiments. It develops that Timothy is in debt to his own master, these debts having been contracted by riotous living. John's wavering at Timothy's door is the occasion

[380] 2, 4.
[381] 1, 1.
[382] 3, 1.
[383] 1, 4.
[384] *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody,* part 2.

for a half-humourous taunt. He is puzzled as to whether he should knock in the cavalier manner and be taken for a "swaggering knave," or in the Puritan manner and be taken for a "hypocritical fool."

Incidents and speeches are sometimes embellished with sharp attacks of this nature. For instance, Jonson's Androgyno, when giving the account of his transmigration, recalls passing from a dull mule:

> Into a very strange beast, by some writers called an ass;
> By others a precise, pure, illuminate brother
> Of those devour flesh, and sometimes one another;
> And will drop you forth a libel or a sanctified lie
> Betwixt every spoonful of a nativity-pie.[385]

Quarlous too seems to derive a keen pleasure from telling of the "notable hypocritical vermin" who cheats his grocer while affecting the "violence of singularity in all he does;" [386] and Chremylus and Carion, the two old fault-finders of Randolph's play, agree as to the "demure cheaters—that have the true goggle of Amsterdam." [387] In *Eastward Ho* a particularly scathing remark is made by Quicksilver. He has been speculating upon the uses to which an old usurer's flesh might be put, and concludes that this man's skin is too thick for parchment but happily remembers that "Your only smooth skin to make fine vellum is your Puritan skin; they be the smoothest and slickest knaves in the country." [388] In contrast to this is the very mild jibe made by Brome, whose doctor, travelling in the land of inverted order, requests that his friends see such strange sights as a "sick man giving counsel to a physician," and a "puritan tradesman teaching a great traveler to lie." [389] With satire as good-humoured and as amusing, Davenant reproaches a deceitful sister. The incident concerns the burial of a treasure chest. A "precise chit" and "cousin Puritan" has been present at the interring of it and has sought to keep the deed a secret. In this very brief recital Davenant places his finger upon the two aspects of hypocrisy, for this woman not only tries to cover up her actual wrong but she attempts to make her wrongs seem right for the sake of the ad-

[385] Volpone, 1, 5.
[386] *Bartholomew Fair*, 1, 1.
[387] *Hey for Honesty*, 1, 1.
[388] *Eastward Ho*, 2, 3.
[389] *The Antipodes*, 1, 7.

vantage and credit attaching to virtue. She boasts that her concealment was "a pious means to avoid the covetous desires ith' the world." [390]

It is apparent that varying degrees of hypocrisy were recognized and condemned by those who were more or less closely observing the Puritans of this day. The pronouncements of so many can scarcely be brushed aside as the mere concoctions of spite. And yet there is a constant desire on the part of the reader of these old plays to make mental reservations, to combat the prevailing opinion, and to say to himself all along that this one example is due to lack of information, that another is the result of the natural cleavage between sectary and dramatist, or that still another is deliberate and malicious misrepresentation. Reproaching the Puritans as hypocrites may have had a slight foundation in fact; at any rate, the excessive piety of some of them rendered the entire group open to suspicion; but the final reaction of the modern reader is that in thus characterizing Puritans as rogues and dissemblers the dramatists were bitterly and unfairly seizing upon the specific frailties of a few members in order to apply their weaknesses to the entire group.

Puritans were amply derided for all their shortcomings, ranging from the most trifling of personal inconsistencies to the grossest fleecing of friends and dependents; but even this wide latitude did not suffice for some of the dramatists, for by them these really good people, especially the women, were frequently made the objects of the most vicious slander, being accused of unchastity and of associating with the derelicts of society. Charging the men with roguery and the women with immorality, the dramatists have singled out only too well the sins which can render each sex most vile. Languebeau Snuffle and one or two others are men whose moral defections are not the least of their villainies, but it is Puritan women, of whom Middleton's Mistress Purge is always the outstanding example, who bear the greater burden of this accusation. The slander of Mistress Purge is directed more against the particular sect to which she belongs than against her as a woman, and in a general way this is true of most of the satires of Puritan women. In the last two dramas of this period, *The Guardian* and *The Country Innocence,* immorality is the most glaring indignity heaped upon these so de-

[390] *The Wits,* 5, 1.

liberately misrepresented as Puritans; and of these the worst in each play is the Puritan woman.

This indicates what will be more fully developed in a later chapter, but the more or less detailed stories and the casual allusions which are features of numerous other plays throughout this period are even more enlightening as to the violent prejudices which actuated playwrights to make these unjustifiable charges. Randolph's phrase concerning "round-headed citizens and cuckolds" [391] is but a doubtful affront and there is nothing very scandalous about the absurdity of believing that he who has a puritanical wife cannot be a cuckold.[392] But to read that a girl "sick of that rare disease called Modesty" is in private "more insatiate than a Puritan" [393] is almost as revolting as are the following allusions which associate Puritans with the most lewd and unspeakable connections. One of Marston's characters describes his mistress as "a kind of Puritan." [394] Another woman of ill repute is sarcastically dubbed "one of a profest abstinence" . . . "of the family of love," [395] and a rough captain is insinuating the same charge against the Puritans when he expresses his disgust for a "puritanical punk." [396] "Either or neither, as the puritan bawd says," [397] is the answer Ralph gives Oliver, implying that such expressions may have been a part of the boyish slang of Elizabethan times. Even more malevolent is Marston's offensive grouping, "your whore went down with the stews and your punk came up with your Puritan;" [398] while this reproach in *Westward Ho* is equally malicious and entirely in keeping with the bold realism of the play: "The Lob has his Lass, the Collier his Dowdy, the Western-man his Pug, the Serving-man his Punk, the Student his Nun in White Friars, the Puritan his sister." [399] Edward Sharpham's *The Fleire* is in true Middletonian vein in more respects than the one now claiming attention. Here we read of the poor woman who was condemned because she "forsook her trade and turned Puritan," only to find that she

[391] *Hey for Honesty,* 1, 1.
[392] *The Swaggering Damsel,* Act 2.
[393] *The Honest Lawyer.*
[394] *What You Will,* 3, 3.
[395] *The Dutch Courtesan,* 1, 2.
[396] *The Rebellion,* 4, 1.
[397] *A Yorkshire Tragedy,* p. 85.
[398] *The Malcontent,* 5, 4.
[399] 2, 2.

might have "kept her trade and been a Puritan, as well as a Puritan keep her religion and be of her trade." [400] A particularly revolting brothel scene is described in one of Glapthorne's plays, and, in recalling the circumstances of the scene, Lovell, in amazement at his own wickedness, asks: "Is't possible I could do this?" Grimes replies, "This, sir? Why you have kicked a flat-nosed wench that snuffled and swore she was a puritan." [401]

The secrecy with which dissenters in various parts of the Kingdom conducted their meetings gave rise to such ill-founded rumors as that sedition and disloyalty were ripe among them, and, what was still more affronting, that immoral practices were permitted and condoned. The Brownists and The Family of Love by reason of their very extravagant zeal were subjected to these vicious attacks more than other sects; yet those dramatists who were least scrupulous did not hesitate to imply that immorality was common among any group of Puritans. This is the most outrageous of all these groundless insults, and is, with all of them, not worthy of refutation. In a play written after 1619 Middleton once more strikes sharply at the Familists, lewdness being justified because "some Familists of Amsterdam will tell you it may be done with a safe conscience." [402] Another comedy, *Love's Riddle,* makes this charge a general one. Here the sting is somewhat relieved by the cleverness of the figure. One of the characters is supposed to be looking at the constellations when he sees "one of the zealous sisters mingle in friendship with a holy brother to beget Reformations." [403]

The ease with which a Puritan's wife could be induced to sin was a favorite form of retaliation, no doubt deriving its impetus from the singular and almost ostentatious modesty so characteristic of Puritan womanhood. Knavesby, another of Middleton's offensive characters, tells of the escapades with his "laundress" and with the "Banbury she-chamberlain." [404] In Tourneur's dark tragedy, Vendice, pretending to have been unsuccessful in his mission of seduction, declares that with half so many words he might have persuaded a

[400] Act 5.
[401] *The Lady Mother,* 2, 1.
[402] *Anything for a Quiet Life,* 2, 1.
[403] *Love's Riddle,* 3, 1.
[404] *Anything for a Quiet Life,* 2, 1.

Puritan's wife to sin." [405] Finally, to put an end to this most disagreeable subject, we turn to Heywood's shocking but truly ingenious "jest" regarding the fall from grace of another 'sister.' [406] The scapegrace Fuller is the one who woos her, but unlike most of these boasters he is unsuccessful in his frequent attempts until he changes his tactics. When his worldly appearance is altered to meet her approval and his frivolous speech becomes sufficiently holy, then does she blushingly relent. Like others of these libellous accounts, this one is enlivened with genuine humour; and even the accusation of unchastity is so ridiculous as to become ineffective. Not so pardonable is the Puritan's hypocritical wavering, her fears lest the "long-tongu'd men would tell," and her endeavor to attribute her sin to an unwillingness to break a scruple. She is the two-fold hypocrite, and her hypocrisy, because it at least is probable, is more disgusting than the always doubtful charge of licentiousness.

The vast political drama unfolding in England after 1600 would be practically unknown had we only the knowledge of it which can be gleaned from the pages of Elizabethan plays. The rapid spread of Puritan principles over the kingdom and the revolution they worked in politics and religion constituted a remarkable phenomenon, but so far as dramatic appeal goes this was in no way comparable to the oddities and scruples of Puritan men and women. The Elizabethan playwright was an astute literary craftsman and he unerringly presented to his audience that particular feature of Puritanism which would win an immediate and hearty response. It is but just to say that some playwrights were sincerely intrigued with this satirical angle of the subject and wrote from sheer interest as well as to gratify their grudge against the sectaries. Most of them looked upon the Puritan as too insignificant and too trivially troublesome a person to be of much importance save as an object of ridicule. The great movement of Puritanism was too near at hand and too far-reaching to be properly estimated or analyzed by any immediate observer. Only when the lawfulness of sports and pleasures was questioned did the stage reveal that it possessed an accurate knowledge of the power and pretensions of the Puritans. The broad issues of Puritanism were left for later writers to gather and interpret. Furthermore,

[405] *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 2, 2.
[406] *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad*, 3, 3.

censorship of the stage was rigid and thorough, and would have permitted no appraisal of events no matter how uncomplimentary to the Puritans the tone might have been. So that when there is a hint of some national issue or lesser political event it rises naturally from a point of ridicule. For instance, the Puritans' loyalty to the Crown was a subject too delicate for stage discussion even had it been of dramatic interest. It was known that in theory a few of the most fanatical Puritans rejected all forms of government as carnal, insisting that the plan of the Scriptures was their only code. Jonson alludes to this extreme belief in *The Alchemist* when Ananias assures his fellow-villains that this sect knows no magistrate.[407] In *Bartholomew Fair* he mentions an old elder who believed a proctor (an official of the Crown) was a claw of the beast, a man whose wife "committed abomination" in marrying him, and one whose every written line was "a long black hair, kembled out of the tail of Antichrist." [408] Jonson did not judge the Puritans by these extremes but he demonstrated time after time the restlessness of their spirits and he well knew that they aspired to more in England's realm than just the right to worship in their own way in some obscure place. A famous Rabbi of his said that he looked "for a bickering ere long and then a battle" [409] and he, or at least his fellow rebels, lived to see their expectations gratified.

Dekker, at the close of a play [410] written about 1610, delves a little farther beneath the surface than was ordinarily the custom. This likewise is incidental and in the midst of some rollicking good fun. A "ghost, cole-black" enters a court room and is greeted as a "black Incubus" and "arch-great Puritan." Asked why his soul is so little he answers that he "did exercise too much with a lively spirit," and attributes its blackness to being "smoakt out of our Country and sent to Rotterdam." As to being lame, crooked, and halt, the Puritan says he "never went upright" and adds:

> Alack! how can I choose but halt, go lame and crooked?
> When I pulled a whole church down upon my back?

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[407] 3, 2.
[408] 1, 1.
[409] *Bartholomew Fair*, 5, 3.
[410] *If This Be Not a Good Play, the Devil Is In It.*

This last inference throws the court into an uproar, the Puritan is ordered thrust out to the gates of hell, there is some well-founded muttering about Puritans "confounding the kingdom if they get the footing" and court is adjourned as Fury says:

> O yes Sessions is deferred
> Because of Puritans, Hell cannot be cleared.

We cannot but wonder whether the witty repartee of this short scene may not have been Dekker's caricature of some such gathering as the Hampton Court Conference where Puritans claimed they were humiliated.

Hey for Honesty divulges another writer's concern for the social disruption which he sees will accompany the triumph of the "Roundheads." Penia, symbol of Poverty, warns the rustics clamoring for the leveling of social distinctions about what will become of their "anabaptistical anarchy." She asks who, in that event, will make their dripping pans, cobble their shoes, mend their stockings, or carry them up to London if the wagon-driver should think himself as good a man as his master.[411] Dicaeus, comfortable parson that he is, refuses to be alarmed, taking it for granted that people who 'can preach to themselves' will be able to do their own labor, and Penia then turns to a eulogy of England's ancient houses, much to the disgust of Clodpole and Stiff, who wonder if she does not know that there is no nobility or that they all are Levellers and Independents. But Penia has shown herself wiser than they. In the preceding scene she has forecast events disastrous to these Puritan levellers. "I have an army of royallists," she says, "that now live under the sequestration-planet; I shall muster them up, if need be . . . I hope to give these Round——— a breakfast, for all they vapour now; I hope to bring 'um under my dominion shortly." [412]

But the stage had matters more vitally important to itself than these to complain of and satirize.

> For since these Genevan doctors came so fast into this land,
> Since that time it was never merry with England.[413]

[411] 2, 5.

[412] This comedy was written by Randolph before 1635 but refers to events which occurred later. Hazlitt, the editor of Randolph's works believes the passages concerning the Roundheads and Levellers were interpolated by an early editor.

[413] *New Custom*, 2, 2. (Written about 1563.)

These were words whose meaning continued to echo throughout England for a full century after Perverse Doctrine so indignantly uttered them. It was the Puritan who was responsible for the rising sentiment against stage plays and sports of all kinds which was slowly but steadily growing as the years passed, and gaining powerful momentum as the Elizabethan era drew to a close. This clash is the one phase of the whole subject of Puritanism which every dramatist who has anything to say concerning it treats with uniform sincerity and perfect honesty. Whether or not England should ban its amusements was a matter of vital import to all dramatists and a subject upon which they were able to speak with authority. It came closest to their lives and to their livelihood, so when they retaliate against oppressive Puritan measures their opinions are to be respected even though their methods of expression may not always be admired. Incidentally, there is every reason to believe that much of the foregoing satire and slander may have been actuated by the deep resentment engendered by this conflict. The Puritans could have been queer in their ways and in their worship, they could even have been inconsistent folk, and still not have aroused the active ill will of the dramatists; but when they were determined to limit the pleasures of others to fit their own conception of godly living, and when they relentlessly harassed all those who had anything to do with popular amusements they were due to cross swords with the dramatists. They brought upon their heads a fury which lashed them for their meddling and every other real or imagined fault. No other group in England was so sorely beset by the Puritans as were the stage folk, and no other group had so excellent an opportunity to strike back.

It has been noted how before the close of the Queen's reign the Dissenters had exhausted themselves in doctrinal disputes and had gradually given a portion of their energies to combating the moral evils of their day. By the second decade of the new century this latter phase of Puritanism had become fixed and predominant. However, Puritans had ever upheld the sanctity of the Sabbath, and its desecration was probably the feature of national life most objectionable to them. As early as 1580 an "Admonition," which was read as a homily in English churches, stressed among other things the importance of Sunday observance. "The Sabbath days, and holy-days

. . . for the special occupying of ourselves in all spiritual exercises, are spent full heathenishly in taverning, tippling, gaming, playing, and beholding of bear-baiting and stage-plays; to the utter dishonor of God, impeachment of all godliness, and unnecessary consuming of men's substances, which ought to be better employed. The want of orderly discipline and catechising hath either sent great numbers, both old and young, back into papistry, or let them run loose into godless atheism." [414] As long as the Queen reigned Sunday continued to be the favorite day for many sports, including theatrical representations, and it was not until 1603 that King James prohibited bear-baiting and bull-baiting on the Sabbath and suppressed stage plays on that day. The masses, the nobles, even the Queen, had enjoyed their Sunday sports, and when certain ones were disallowed for the people, they were still continued at Court. This circumstance, together with the obvious excesses which prevailed at the Courts of James and Charles, continued to arouse the ire of the Puritans until the time came when their principles prevailed over Court and Kingdom.

Elizabethan playwrights were not much concerned about the Puritans' stand against Sabbath desecration. But there are many instances throughout their plays proving that their deepest sentiments and convictions were outraged by the spirit of repression which, first expressing itself in seeking Sabbath reform, had gradually extended its scope until it threatened to put down all the lively sports and pleasures of merry England. As the Puritans grew in numbers in the outlying sections of England and gained greater power in Parliament they succeeded in banning all sports on the Sabbath and in eliminating some sports altogether from the parishes in which Puritan adherents were strongly entrenched. They believed their age to be exceedingly corrupt, a belief which history verifies—but no more so than it condemns the severity of Puritan measures. It is conceivable that the passing of the confessional may have weakened morality in the rural districts and among the lower classes. Certainly the masses had not become as dissolute as their countrymen at court. The Puritan could do naught but protest against conditions at court but he set about to reform the masses. He determined

[414] J. Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, 2, p. 668.

to take away the old, time-sanctioned customs and sports which he deemed unnecessary and detrimental.

Among these, maypoles and their attendant festivities were especially loathed. John Stubbes in his *Anatomy of Abuses,* 1583, speaks of them as "stinckying idols."[415] It was customary on the night before the first of May for the rural population to go into the woods and pass the time in games and sport. The following day they returned bringing the Maypole, and then feasted and danced until evening. Custom seems to have sanctioned doubtful practices at this and other festivities, Shrove Tuesday in particular. The Puritans were solemnly opposed to these questionable revelries. Dancing also for this reason was taboo, and the popular morrice, or morris-dance, a time-honored rustic diversion in which the performers took the part of Robin Hood and other characters in English folk-lore, seemed to receive more than its share of criticism. When Roscius the player wishes to represent before his guest-Puritans the virtues in full dance, Bird protests that he wants no "wanton jig", asserting, "no dance is lawful but prinkum-prankum." Mistress Flowerdew too must add her reproach: "O, vile, absurd, Maypole, Maid Marian virtue."[416] Two of Nabbes' characters jeer about "studying a conceited health . . . to the long standing of Banbury Maypole," and maintain that good wives will "find dancing a more wholesome exercise for the body than some of their Doctrines for the Soul."[417]

A portion of the beautiful Masque, *The Sad Shepherd,* tells us with what concern Jonson viewed the suppression of harmless pleasures and anticipated the vices and excesses certain to follow. Actual personages and direct conversation are usually employed when Jonson satirizes the Puritans, but here he has more or less lost sight of character, thinking more of the principle involved, and he does more scolding and moralizing in this instance than in all his other Puritan satires.

Robin issues the welcome to the shepherds' feast, rejoicing in youth and spirits, calling for the nimble horn-pipe, songs and dances, and asking that each cut down a triumph-bough. "Such are the rites the youthful June allows," he says. To which Clarion replies:

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[415] P. 149.
[416] *Muse's Looking Glass,* 5, 1.
[417] *Covent Garden,* 4, 1.

> They were, gay Robin; but the sourer sort
> Of shepherds now disclaim in all such sport:
> And say our flock the while are poorly fed,
> When with such vanities the swains are led.

Tuck, clothing his Puritans as shepherds, accuses them of avarice, dishonesty, and the perpetration of many foul tricks to vex their enemies; and Lionel contrasts the openness of their own pastimes with these hidden vices.

> They call ours pagan pastimes, that infect
> Our blood with ease, our youth with all neglect;
> Our tongues with wantonness, our thoughts with lust;
> And what they censure ill, all others must.

Jonson's reproof closes with Robin puzzling over the Puritan's "sharp sight . . . of late," and lamenting the past "happy age" and "charitable times," when "Shepherds knew how to love and not to lust."

Two decades later, J. Jones' tragi-comedy *Adrasta* voices the same regret regarding the moroseness of his times. The circumstances too are much the same, though Jones' tone carries less rancour than Jonson's. Damon calls all hands to work, for it is the festival of Sylvanus and a fit place for dancing must be 'round-entrenched.' The sports of May will be enacted, the shepherds will frolic, and will "lose no ceremony of their ancient mirth." Damon loves them all—and then a note of sadness enters and is echoed by the other swains—for he knows that "the curious preciseness, and all-pretended gravity, of those that seek to banish hence these harmless sports, have thrust away much ancient honesty." [418]

Beaumont and Fletcher occasionally laugh at the inconsistencies and make quips at the faults of the Puritans; but had these people been only peculiar and precise, they would have received but passing notice from them. What aroused the ire of these progressive Elizabethan spirits was the Puritan's determination to suppress the rightful pursuits of men and to limit the personal freedom of Englishmen. An early play of Fletcher's is one of the first dramas to mention the Puritans' aversion to sports. Jacques says:

> There's ne'er a one of these, the worst and weakest,
> (Choose where you will), but dares attempt the raising,

[418] See footnote to Jonson's *The Sad Shepherd,* Cunningham edition, p. 492.

> Against the sovereign peace of Puritans,
> A may-pole and a morris, maugre mainly
> Their zeal and dudgeon-daggers; and yet more,
> Dares plant a stand of battering ale against 'em,
> And drink 'em out o' the parish.[419]

Shorthose likewise chafes under repression:

> Not a fiddle, but all preach'd down with puritans;
> No meat but legs of beef.[420]

The freedom and license of Italy fascinated Beaumont and Fletcher as it did most of the dramatists of this age and nowhere is that far-off glitter more poignantly contrasted with the gloom and intolerance which they saw creeping upon England than in *The Custom of the Country,* where of a certain character it is said, "He was of Italy, and that country breeds not Precisians that way, but hot libertines;" [421] or in *The Wild Goose Chase* where Pinac, speaking of Italy, thus expresses his admiration and annoyance:

> 'Tis a brave country;
> Not pester'd with your stubborn, precise puppies,
> That turn all useful and allow'd contentments
> To scabs and scruples—hang 'em capon-worshippers.[422]

Probably it was the Book of Sports, King James' illy-advised retaliation against this rigorous Puritanism, which prompted Beaumont in 1620, the year after it was issued, to write his only characterization of an absurd Puritan.[423] The Book of Sports had thrown this question before the public for discussion and dispute and several plays within the next decade or so reflect the growing contention. At rural festivities the hobby-horse was the favorite in the revels, especially in the morrice-dance. It was a traditional figure dating far back into medieval days. Just as Stubbes thought of the May-pole as an "idol" so does Busy consider the hobby-horse "an idol, a very idol, a fierce and rank idol." [424] But in Beaumont's play it is the symbol of all joy and amusement, while Bomby the cobbler is the

[419] *The Woman's Prize* (1606) 2, 4.
[420] *Wit Without Money,* 3, 1.
[421] 4, 1.
[422] 2, 1.
[423] *Women Pleased,* 4, 2.
[424] *Bartholomew Fair,* 3, 1.

embodiment of the Puritans' aversion to worldly pleasures. He and a group of bystanders engage in a ridiculous and stupid debate as to whether he shall again ride the "beast of Babylon." Bomby's argument bristles with the zeal, flowery speech, and well-worn scruples of the stage Puritan.

> This beast of Babylon I will never back again;
> His back is sure profane, and his lewd wi-hies
> The songs of Hymyn and Gymyn in the wilderness—
> (I feel it in my conscience, and I dare speak it)
> This unedified ambling hath brought a scourge upon us;
> This hobby-horse sincerity we liv'd in,
> War and the sword of slaughter: I recounce it,
> And put the beast off thus, the beast polluted,
> And now no more shall Hope-on-high Bomby
> Follow the painted pipes of worldly pleasures,
> And, with the wicked, dance the Devil's measures,
> Away, thou pamper'd jade of vanity,
> Stand at the livery of lewd delights now
> And eat the provender of prick-ear'd folly!
> My dance shall be to the pipe of persecution.

Bomby, however, is finally persuaded to again ride the horse, fearing that if he does not he may lose his trade and be put in the stocks. He is not a hypocrite but only a weak, persecuted zealot, forced, as he says, to take his persecution and remain a by-word to his brethren.

Massinger is seldom irritated with the Puritans, but twice he injects into scenes which are laid in foreign lands the distressing problems of his own age and country. In one instance a Spanish curate berates his neighbors because they have Puritan hearts and spurn all pastimes;[425] and at another time a maid in an eastern court speaks as would any restless girl of Elizabethan days who had a companion not willing to dance, and able to sing only "holy hymns and those to vile tunes too."[426] "I am so tired," she says, "with your tedious exhortations, doctrines, uses, of your religious morality, that, for my health's sake, I must take the freedom to enjoy a little of those pretty pleasures that I was born to." These and a few other equally restrained protests against Puritan measures and customs are

[425] *The Spanish Curate*, 3, 2.
[426] *Emperor of the East*, 3, 2.

illustrative of the broad wholesome quality of Massinger's plays and are admirable examples of genuine representation of the Puritans.

Animosity toward the stage was but one phase of Puritanism's rigid, harsh attitude toward all pleasure. Puritans had for many years looked upon the theatres as vain and wicked places of amusement. They thought only of the fickle and the corrupt side of the stage; in fact, they did not frequent the theatres enough to know what an educational and liberalizing force they were for Elizabethans. Randolph's Puritans are surprised at the good things they have been enticed into witnessing, and Mistress Flowerdew is honest enough to admit that she has plucked a "good and wholesome salad of instruction" [427] from the play. Busy was led astray by pure frivolity and weakness, as was the case with the average stage Puritan. The rabid Puritan, represented by such as Busy, found satisfaction in quoting the Biblical argument against the exchange of attire between the sexes.[428] There may have been not a few of these fanatics among out-and-out dissenters, but opposition such as this was not what was most feared and hated by the dramatists. All through the first quarter of the century they were witnessing the steadily increasing spirit of intolerance among the mass of Englishmen, and those who lived and wrote in the last decade of Charles' reign saw the theatre declining until only the most frivolous dilettante groups remained as patrons.

The dramatists themselves were partially responsible for the state of affairs. "This business of abusing the Puritans" [429] as Pepys put it, did not tend to alleviate the tension. At least one dramatist, himself a constant though fairly amiable offender, recognizes the Puritan's pique at those who made his ghosts walk over their stages.[430] Throughout the whole period the threatened fate of the drama was hastened by the very real and obvious licentiousness of some stage plays. The offensive dramas of lower class life and some of the horrible plays which drew the worst from Italian literature were in the early years received with almost as much misgiving, by precise people, as were the decadent dramas of the decade just before the

[427] *Muse's Looking Glass*, 5, 1.
[428] *Bartholomew Fair*, 5, 3.
[429] *The Diary*, September 4, 1668.
[430] *Muse's Looking Glass*, 1, 1.

theatres closed. Then too, conditions were not at all relieved by the manner in which some dramatists accepted or made light of these excesses. It is in the spirit of raillery that Randolph mimics the prayer of a brother longing for the destruction of London's playhouses, and tells about the Puritans marvelling over the increase of playhouses which have "grown so obscene of late, that one begets another." [431] To theatre-goers it was a merry jest to watch Busy rail against "stage-players, rhymers, and morrice-dancers, who have walked hand in hand, in contempt of the brethren, and the cause," and to hear him tell the protesting Leatherhead who was presenting "nothing but what is licensed by authority" that he is "all license, even licentiousness itself." [432]

On the other hand, the rancorous tone of some rejoinders indicates that the rising tide of objection was viewed with concern by the more far-sighted. "What hurt's now in a play, 'gainst which some rail so vehemently?" [433] queries one character; and no less an offender against the Puritans than Middleton laments the uncertain state of players who know "not when to play, for fearful fools, where to play, for Puritan fools, nor what to play, for critical fools." [434] Other playwrights are more or less sincerely solicitous. Lodowick Barrey "vows by Paper, Pen, and Ink," in the Prologue of *Ram Alley,* to produce

> Conceits so new, so harmless free
> That Puritans themselves may see
> A play, yet not in public preach
> That players such lewd doctrines teach,
> That their pure joints do quake and tremble
> When they do see a man resemble
> The picture of a villain . . .

But in this popular play his clever sallies against the Puritans render his vow most frivolous. The very title of *A Maidenhead Well Lost* must have aroused the suspicions of censorious persons, or at least have made the author feel that it would do so, for in a message "to the reader", preceding his play, Heywood very soberly explains and justifies it. He assures those who would read beyond it that "there

[431] *Ibid.,* 1, 1.
[432] *Bartholomew Fair,* 5, 3.
[433] *Wit Without Money,* 3, 1.
[434] *A Mad World My Masters,* 2, 1.

is nothing herein contained which doth deviate either from modesty or good manners;" and he concludes by again emphasizing that all may read it—"excepting such, whose prepared palates . . . can neither relish the peace of the Church nor Common weal." Chapman ardently protests that "the stage and actors are not so contemptful as every innovating Puritan, and ignorant sweater out of jealous envy, would have the world imagine," [435] and Jonson's words in 1625 are prophetic of events soon to transpire: "Well, they talk we shall have no more parliaments, God bless us, but an we have, I hope Zeal-of-the-Land Busy and my gossip Rabbi Troubletruth will start up, and see we shall have painful good ministers to keep school and catechise our youth, and not teach them to speak plays and act fables of false news in this manner, to the supervexation of town and country, with a wannion." [436]

No other document so elaborately yet so plainly states the Puritan's case against the theatre as did William Prynne's *Histriomastix*. In this unparalleled denunciation comprising over a thousand pages Prynne combines all Biblical, historical and contemporary arguments into what must have been to those of like mind one overwhelming array of evidence against the theatre. To stage folk, to the Court, to everyone on the opposite side it was a signal for battle. The authorities promptly and savagely stopped the flow of Prynne's eloquence, for the time being, and made the futile gesture of burning his book in public; the dramatists countered his charges with ugly taunts and a sarcasm that proves they were not aware of the gravity of the situation.

James Shirley immediately joined the chorus of opposition to Prynne, addressing to him the dedication to *The Bird in a Cage,* a play which appeared in the same year as the *Histriomastix* and while Prynne was awaiting sentence for his indiscretion. The subtle irony and apt allusions to various salient features of Puritanism seem to justify a complete quotation:

"Sir—The fame of your candor and innocent love to learning, especially to that musical part of humane knowledge, Poetry, and in particular to that which concerns the stage and scene (yourself, as I hear, having lately written a Tragedy) doth justly challenge from me this Dedication. I had

[435] *The Revenge of Bussy D'ambois,* 1, 1.
[436] *The Staple of News,* 3, 2.

an early desire to congratulate your happy retirement; but no poem could tempt me with so fair a circumstance as this in the title, wherein I take some delight to think (not without imitation of yourself) who have ingeniously fancied such elegant and opposite names for your own Compositions as Health's Sickness, The Unloveliness of Love-locks, etc. how aptly I may present you at this time, with the Bird in a Cage, a comedy, which wanteth, I must confess, much of that ornament, which the stage and action lent it, for it comprehending also another play or interlude, personated by ladies. I must refer to your imagination, the music, the songs, the dancing, and other varieties, which I know would have pleas'd you infinitely in the presentment. I was the rather inclined to make this ablation, that posterity might read you a patron to the muses, and one that durst in such a critical age, bind up the wounds which ignorance had printed upon wit and the professors: proceed (inimitable Mecenas) and having such convenient leisure, and an indefatigable Pegasus, I mean your prose (which scorneth the the road of common sense, and despiseth any style in his way) travels still in the pursuit of new discoveries, which you may publish if you please, in your next book of Digressions, if you do not happen presently to convert the organs, you may in time confute the steeple, and bring every parish to one bell.

"This is all I have to say at this time, and my own occasions not permitting my personal attendance I have entreated a gentleman to deliver this testimony of my service; many faults have escaped the press, which your judgment will no sooner find than your mercy correct, by which you shall teach others a charity to your own volumes, though they be all errata. If you continue where you are, you will every day enlarge your fame, and beside the engagement of other poets to celebrate your Roman constancy, in particular oblige the tongue and pen of your devout honourer, James Shirley."

The following year, 1634, Shirley furnished the text for a masque, *The Triumph of Peace,* which was represented by The Inns of Court and was intended as an "Anti-puritan demonstration." [437] The content of neither *The Bird in a Cage* nor of this masque had aught to do with the Puritans but the latter aimed by utter splendor to dispel the last shadow of Prynne's zeal and to refute his attacks on drama and royalty. Up to this time it was probably the most magnificent and costly spectacle ever exhibited in England, costing upward of twenty-five thousand pounds. Shirley is believed to have written additional matter to *The Nightwalker,*[438] a play which Beaumont and Fletcher had written about 1614. In this old play we read about:

[437] See C. M. Cayley, "Representative English Comedies," 3, p. 547.
[438] See Dyce, 2, p. 580.

> A book new printed against playing, dancing,
> Masquing, May-poles; a zealous brother's book,
> And full of fables.[439]

A servant in the scene following this mentions a character who studies to "answer the late Histriomastrix" by talking wittily and learnedly of "change and transformations." It is obvious that neither of these references could have been made by either Beaumont or Fletcher.

Mayne speaks of "a book that suffer'd martyrdom by fire in Cheapside;" [440] Heywood, in the preface to *A Maidenhead Well Lost* deplores "the critical censure of that most horrible Histriomastix, whose incharitable doom having damned all such to the flames of Hell, has itself already suffered a most remarkable fire here upon earth;" and the unknown author of a less notorious play wishes "that all crop-eared Histriomastixes who cannot endure a civil, witty comedy, but by his racked exposition renders it down-right drollery may be doomed to Aucyrus and skip there amongst Satyrs for his rough and severe censure." [441] Even the primitive-minded Goggle is up-to-date on this matter. He rails at Nevergood:

> Thou madest me stand i' the Popish pillory
> With Prynne and Burton, only for speaking
> A little sanctified treason.[442]

Prynne's outburst is also the occasion for Jonson's most up-to-the-minute and bitter farewell to his enemies. The Puritans are called "Persians", the "luke-warm Protestants, "Medes"; and Mistress Polish eulogizes a 'sister' as a woman who

> Knew Burton and his Bull, and Scribe Prynne, gents,
> Praesto-be-gone, and all the Pharisees.[443]

A parody of "that right valiant knave's" pompous speech is Jonson's final pronouncement against the enemies of his art:

> One that hath lost his ears by a just sentence
> Of the Star-chamber, a right valiant knave—

[439] 3, 3.
[440] *The City Match*, 2, 2.
[441] *Lady Alimony*, 1, 2.
[442] *Hey for Honesty*, 4, 1.
[443] *The Magnetic Lady*, 1, 1.

> And is a histrionical contempt
> Of what fears most; it being a mischief
> In his own apprehension inavoidable.[444]

The *Histriomastix* was probably responsible for some of the anti-puritan sentiment of William Strode's play *The Floating Island.* Malvole, judging by the allusions, is Prynne. "My ears are questioned, locks which I have sever'd must hide my ear stumps," are words based only too well on fact. Melancholico takes the part of a grumbler, bewailing the wickedness of King Prudentius' subjects after the manner of Puritans harping on the evils of the English Court. This surly, 'pious', hypocritical old person is finally married to Concupiscence, the daughter of Amorous, and the King, undoubtedly uttering the very earnest wish of all onlookers, consigns the well-mated pair to the suburbs or to New England. This is one of two occasions when the author sneers at migrations to the New World, the second being where Melancholico talks of a way "to relieve the brethren and raise their stock of holy usury for new plantations." [445] *The Floating Island* was presented in August, 1636, before the King and Queen on their visit to Oxford. "Ostensibly the play was an attack on Puritanism, and was written to please the King and curry the favor of an Anglican audience." [446] Compared with other plays, which satirize Puritans *The Floating Island* is decidedly 'flat'. In the introduction Strode states his disinclination toward the writing of a play, and his most uninteresting caricature of a group about which others had lately spun so many clever satires proves that his hesitation was justified.

In this connection Davenant's satire of George Wither is interesting as another of these personal tilts between a prominent Puritan and an eminent dramatist. The character of Castruccio appears in The Cruel Brother, 1627, and is intended to ridicule this well-known Puritan, who, like Prynne, had suffered various persecutions and whose work entitled *Abuses Stript and Whipt* had appeared in 1613. Davenant mentions Wither's book in an introduction to his play. In act 1, a person by the name of Dorido thus answers Castruccio's question regarding party loyalties:

[444] *Ibid.,* 3, 4.
[445] 4, 2.
[446] E. G. Hoffsten, *The Floating Island,* Penna. Thesis, 1908.

> Not of your faction, sir, if none return
> Unto the prison for your libeling.
> You remember your vices—strip'd and whip'd.
> Your trim eclogues, the fulsome satire too,
> Written to his Grace: wherein you flatter,
> Whine, and damn yourself to get a pardon,
> For what seems there a resolute offense.

Castruccio's reply is more to the point than the majority of the ranting, meaningless speeches made by Puritan characters on the stage:

> Cry you mercy, precious coz! . . .
> Sympathy is corrupted. Behold society amongst
> The wicked! whilst a virtuous man
> Is left alone to resist his bad fate.
> Let him chide the fulsome age, rail against
> The times, aloud. Though in a vault, or 'tween
> Two hills, he shall find no zealous echo
> To second his bold language. When I die
> I die a martyr to the common-weal.

To Davenant the Puritans were real and personal enemies, yet seldom in his pre-Restoration plays does he seek to amuse his audiences by caricaturing them. *News from Plymouth* has the character of Cable, who with his love for the precise widow Carrach is not unlike the Captain Blade and his widow-love of Cowley's *Guardian*. Davenant evinces but little interest in the Puritans as individuals, but in his play he mentions some of their well-known eccentricities and prejudices. Act 4 has some amusing lines, when, after the challenge of the Dutch boatswain, Trifle orders the report to be circulated through England that 'Rome is taken by the ships of Amsterdam and the Pope himself to save his life has turned Brownist.' When news of Richelieu's murder and other false reports have been well started Zeal is led to exclaim: "Antichrist is converted . . . it will be joyful tidings to the exil'd congregation." In the dramatis personae of *The Unfortunate Lovers,* Fibbia is listed as "a precise widow," but in the play her connection with the holy brethren is a very luke-warm one, the satire depending upon her indelicate words and conduct. Davenant's first masque, *The Temple of Love,* digresses from its discussion of the pleasant and then popular theme

of Platonic love long enough for the magician to blast the Puritans as,

> A sect of modern devils;
> Fine precise fiends, that hear the devout close
> At ev'ry virtue but their own, that claim
> Chambers and tenements in heaven, as they
> Had purchas'd there, and all the angels were
> Their harbingers.[447]

By his own description, these were the men who for the time being frustrated the efforts of this one dramatist who promised to bring new life to the decadent drama. Unlike others who did not follow playwriting so seriously, Davenant made a business of evading the Puritan laws which during the Commonwealth prohibited the writing as well as the staging of plays. With the accession of Charles the Second he was rewarded with the royal patent authorizing him to produce plays. Thus Davenant lived to triumph over his enemies and to resume the practice of his art, an experience which came to few, for the Puritan surveillance was so thorough and the state of the drama such a sorry one that few spirits survived or deserved to survive.

Parts of three Introductions to *The Queen*, an obscure drama written shortly before the Puritans came into power, are of interest to this subject since they voice the baffled indignation of those anxious about the theatre in these troubled times. The subject matter and spirit of these Introductions are indicative of the reasonableness of many Englishmen who are neither carping Puritans nor fickle courtiers. R. C. who writes the first Introduction says he is positive "there is more gain in seeing men act vice than virtue fain; and he less tempts the danger that delights in profest players than close Hypocrites." The second Introduction asks, among other questions: "Are stages hurtful for the ill they teach and needless for the good?" T. C., in the third Introduction, looks into the future and severely condemns Puritanism for the ill effect it will have upon the next generation.

> How in the next age will our Youth lament
> The loss of wit, condemned to banishment.
> With that the duller rout despiseth, 'cause they
> Miss it in what their zealous Priests display:

[447] Vol. 1, 295.

For priests in melancholy zeal admit
Only a grave formality for wit;
And would have those that govern us comply
And cherish their fallacious tyranny.
But therein States can no advantage gain,
They harmless mirth improperly restrain.

CHAPTER THREE

Instead of the merely incidental references to Puritans and in addition to the satirizing of real or imaginary vices and idiosyncrasies of these people the dramatists also drew full-length pictures of Puritans and of the sect. In several of these plays the Puritan is made the leading character; in others he exists only for the characterization of the Puritans as a group; while in still others there is such a close blending of character and sect that the dramatist gives us not only characterizations of individual Puritans but also a detailed sketch of 'the brethren.' In many cases, the best results in this type of satire are attained by the dramatists after they have experimented, so to speak, with incidental allusions and short satirical passages. This is especially true of Jonson and Middleton, whose early plays afford many examples of such satire before the writing of *Bartholomew Fair* and *The Family of Love*. The last decade of the sixteenth century saw the dramatists beginning to cater even more to the taste of the theatre-going public than ever before by writing plays of middle-class and low-life types which were especially well adapted to satire of this sort, and by holding Puritans up to scorn and ridicule—often devoting an entire scene or even most of a play to this abuse.

One of the earliest attempts at Puritan portraiture is found in the anonymous play *A Knack to Know a Knave*,[448] written about 1592. Here we have a true Puritan character under the caption 'priest', who has most of the earmarks of the later stage Puritan. This 'priest' is one of the 'knaves' of the play and his actions and speech run true to the prevailing misconception of the sixteenth century Puritan as a "dissembling hypocrite." He lives "only by the heavenly manna." His father, the Bailiff advises him always "to make show of holiness; and blind the world with thy hypocricy" and the son betters the instruction, vying with his brothers—the courtier, the coneycatcher and the farmer—in deceit and treachery.

[448] Dodsley, 6, pp. 517, 579, 585-90.

He utters his own condemnation when he tells how he treats his parishioners:

> And I among my brethren and my friends,
> Do still instruct 'em with my doctrine,
> And Yea and Nay goes through the world with us,
> Fie, not an oath we swear for twenty pound:
> Brethren, say we, take heed by Adam's fall;
> For by his sins we are condemned all. . . .

He refuses to help the poor of his parish, for, says he, "the spirit doth not move me thereunto"; extorts money by dishonest means one moment and exhorts to righteousness the next, until the reader is led to exclaim with another character in this play, the allegorical character Honesty: "See how he can turn and wind the Scripture to his own use." Honesty, however, brings all these 'knaves' to account, and when "John, the precise" who constantly "with holiness blinds the people's eyes" is finally caught in a scheme to obtain the King's seal to "carry tin, lead, wool and broadcloths beyond seas," merely for personal gain and against the good of the commonwealth, Honesty pronounces this just punishment:

> But now to you that will do nothing
> Except the spirit move you thereunto,
> You shall, for abusing the blessed word of God,
> And mocking the divine order of Ministry,
> Whereby you have led the ignorant into errors,
> You (I say) as you were shameless in your shameful dealing,
> Shall to your shame, and the utter shame of all
> Bad-minded men that live as thou hast done,
> Stand in Finnsburg fields, near London,
> And there, as a dissembling hypocrite, be shot to death.

Although a most bitter and decidedly unjust picture, the dramatist here expresses his disapproval of the hypocrisy of this 'priest' by meting out this punishment. There is, in addition, a touch of humour when in answer to the plea of "John the precise" to "be more favourable" Honesty replies: "The Spirit doth not move me thereunto," which somewhat breaks the force of the above moral indignation.

We find, before 1600, several more or less successful attempts at portraiture of the Puritans. One of these is in Middleton's *The Mayor of Quinborough,* where a play within a play is the method

employed by the dramatist to expose Oliver the Puritan's prejudice and sham. Simon the tanner and Oliver are contending for the office of Mayor. They enter together, disputing heatedly regarding priority in coming into the room. Simon says, "How, before me? I scorn thee, thou wattle-faced pig," and Oliver indignantly replies, "Pig? I defy thee; my uncle was a Jew, and scorned the motion." Oliver soon senses Simon's popularity and during the same scene threatens him thus:

> But I will prove a rebel all thy year,
> And raise up the seven deadly sins against thee.

But Simon scornfully replies: "The deadly sins will scorn to rise by thee . . . 'tis not for every scab to be acquainted with them." [449]

Later in the play we find Simon elected Mayor and his first act is to order Oliver's loom seized and the fustian given to the poor because it is "heretic fustian." The officer brings Oliver to the Mayor's house and to Simon's "welcome, thou rebel!" Oliver answers, "I scorn thy welcome, I." He will not "stoop for grace," and hearing that there are players in the house he begs of Simon: "Despatch me, I charge thee, in the name of all the brethren." Whereupon, the following lively dialogue continues this scene:

SIMON:
Nay, now, proud rebel, I will make thee stay;
And, to thy greater torment, see a play.

OLIVER
O devil! I conjure thee by Amsterdam!

SIMON:
Our word is past.
Justice may wink a while, but see at last. (Trumpet sounds to announce the commencement of the play.)
The play begins. Hold, stop him, stop him!

OLIVER
O that profane trumpet! O! O!

SIMON:
Set him down there, I charge you, officers.

OLIVER
I'll hide my ears and stop my eyes.

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[449] 3, 3.

SIMON:
Down with his golls, I charge you.

OLIVER
O tyranny, tyranny! revenge it, tribulation!
For rebels there are many deaths; but sure the only way
To execute a puritan is seeing of a play.
O, I shall swound.

He does not swoon, however, and the play continues. Simon, disliking the clown in the play, himself takes the part. One of the players throws meal in his face and takes his purse, but, although Simon is very much chagrined at this, he says: "Nothing grieves me now, but that I hear Oliver the Puritan laugh at me. A pox on your puritan face, this will make you in love with plays as long as you live. We shall not keep you from them now." And true it is that Oliver has forgotten both himself and his former scruples, and exclaims, "In sincerity I was never better pleased at an exercise. Ha, ha, ha." At the end of this scene Simon instructs his men to hold Oliver so that he may have "his eyes pulled out for a fortnight." Oliver overhears this command and shows the extremes to which he intends to go in his worldliness when he exclaims:

> My eyes? hang thee!
> A deadly sin or two shall pluck them out first;
> That is my resolution. Ha, ha, ha.[450]

This is, of course, deliberate misrepresentation of the well-known Puritan aversion to the theatres, with a corresponding exaggeration of the extremes to which converts to theatre-going were likely to resort. It is prophetic of the sort of thing that Jonson and Randolph will later do much more skillfully.

Middleton and Chapman were among the first to combine characterizations of the sect as a whole with their portraits of individual Puritans. In Chapman's *An Humourous Day's Mirth*, a play complete in one act, satire of Puritan customs and eccentricities is the theme. This is, moreover, the first extant Elizabethan play devoted entirely to this purpose. Here are recounted a day's episodes in the life of Florilla, a foolish Puritan wife, "young and delicate, although

[450] 5, 1.

too religious in the purest sort," who is easily led into difficulties by an unsuspecting husband. Florilla's admirers describe her as a "passing fair young woman, that is a passing foul Puritan," and we first find her in conversation with her husband, rejecting his jewels as "vain things . . . fantastical and fruitless," and adding, "surely I fear I have much sinned to stoop and take them up, bowing my body to an idle work, the strength I have had to this very deed might have been used to take a poor soul up in the high way. . . ." She regards a velvet hood as a "vain devilish device! a toy made with a superfluous flap," and objects to the vain salutations "your ladyship" and "your honour," for, are not these "idle words?" She expresses a disbelief in fairies and a dislike for poetry. Her 'pureness,' however, yields to 'courses of temptation,' and, although she aims to secrete her indiscretions, her husband, Labervele, is not so easily blinded. He has become "an old Lord jealous of his young wife," and remarks, regarding one of the 'brethren' who is unduly attentive to her: "Why every man for her sake is a Puritan. The Devil will shortly turn Puritan, or the Puritan will turn Devil." Florilla agrees to undergo all possible tests of her constancy, "for it is written, we must pass to perfection through all temptation, Abacuke the fourth." Labervele, in utter impatience, exclaims, "Abacuke, cuke me no cukes, in adoors I say, thieves, Puritans, murderers . . ." Having been made a "mocking stock" by her pretended lover, Florilla is advised by him to repent, for she is discrediting the religion to which she pretends to adhere. She can do little but assent and soon reappears in the drab garb of the sect, much to the amazement of the people who have observed her actions. She again puts on the speech and conduct of the Puritans as easily as she dons their clothes, and then, in justification of her imprudence, sounds the keynote of the humourous little farce: "Surely the world is full of vanity, a woman must take heed she do not hear a lewd man speak, for every woman cannot when she is tempted, when the wicked fiend gets her into his snares escape like me, or grace's measure is not so filled up, nor so pressed down in every one as me." *An Humourous Day's Mirth* is, as Chapman says, "a pleasant comedie"; even the satire of the wilful little Puritan is too kindly to "dim this mirthful day" and not at all in the bitter vein of so much of the satire of the Puritans found in other plays.

In *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus,* dated 1598, we have a more complete but entirely different picture. In this interesting play, the dullness of Stupido the Puritan is contrasted with the wisdom of Studioso, giving a contemptuous and deliberate misrepresentation of the many scholarly Puritans of Elizabethan times, particularly the more learned Puritans of the earlier years. In act three, Stupido addresses a group of scholars on their way to Parnassus: "I have (I pray God prosper my labors) analyzed a piece of an homily according to Ramus, and surely in my mind and simple opinion, Mr. Peter maketh all things very plain and easy. As for Seton's 'Logique', truly I never look on it but it makes my head ache . . ." Stupido objects to the playing of cards and gives his scholarly companions the advice of his uncle who "never wore cap nor surplice . . . nor any such popish ornament" and who had warned Stupido not to study the "vain Arts of Rhetorique, Poetrie, and Philosophie" for "there is no sound edifying knowledge in them." He adds his own comment to this advice, saying, "why they are more vain than a pair of organs or a morrice dance. If you will be good men indeed, go no further in this way; follow no longer these profane arts that are the rags and parings of learning, sell all these books, and buy a good Martin, and two or three hundred of catechisms of Geneva's print, and I warrant you will have learning enough. Mr. Martin and the other good man took this course . . ." In this same act he calls artists "fools" because of their "indecent apparel," and this provokes an interesting discussion.

STUPIDO:

Why you shall not see a Rhetorician, a rimer, (or poet as you call it) but he wears such diabolical ruffs and wicked great breeches full of sin, that it would make a zealous professor's heart bleed for grief. Well, Mr. Wigginton and Mr. Penorie never wore such profane hose, but such plain apparel as I do. Go with me and you shall hear a good man exercise. I will get them to handle for your better instruction this point by the way; I would gladly do some good of you if I could.

PHILOMUSES:

I' faith . . .

STUPIDO:

O swear not, swear not!

STUDIOSO:

With thee, my loving Stupido we'll wende;
And to the counsel willing ears will lend.

STUPIDO:
Follow me, I'll bring you into a sober company.

In act four, Amoretto, whose verse runs true to his name and personality, characterizes this scrupulous person as:

> Strict Stupido, that puling Puritan,
> That artless ass, and that earth-creeping dolt,
> Who, for he cannot reach unto the arts,
> Made show as though he would neglect the arts,
> And cared not for the spring of Helicon.

Studioso, also aptly named, is attracted by the 'uptwinkling' of Stupido's eyes and misled for the moment by this Puritan's earnestness. Amoretto and Philomuses open his eyes to the truth, the latter extending his characterization of Stupido to the entire sect:

> Ay! these do nourish a neglected beard,
> Much like the grunting keeper of a herd;
> Speak but a few words, because they would seem wise;
> Wear but a plain coat after the wonted guise.
> Thou owest me thanks, for but for me I wis
> Thou hadst been a plain puritan ere this.

We here have Stupido a Puritan seen through the eyes of a scholar. Stupido fittingly speaks, in this type of play, in prose, while, with equal propriety, the other more academically-minded characters express themselves in verse. The Parnassus group of plays has its setting in a university atmosphere and it is interesting to compare this portrayal of Stupido with the treatment of Puritans in the popular drama. Like Stupido, almost every stage Puritan makes a pompous display of his narrowmindedness but few playwrights were interested in a Puritan because he was deliberately and willfully stupid. Only a playwright writing for a university audience would have drawn such a detailed picture of a man walking among the learned yet refusing to derive any benefit. To the popular dramatists, the Puritan's ignorance was important only for its comic possibilities, but to this author ignorance is, quite naturally, the paramount fault. The picture of Stupido is a witty and carefully drawn one, and in its reserve there is a coldness and lack of sympathy toward dissenting people which is as caustic as the more ribald satires spoken in the London playhouses. Stupido may have had his counterparts

at Oxford or Cambridge but he certainly was not representative of the many Puritans who were attending the universities.

As we enter the new century we meet with misrepresentation of the worst sort. Languebeau Snuffle, a character in Cyril Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy* is, in harmony with the bitter ironic tone of the play, one of the most deliberately misrepresented and grossly caricatured Puritans in all Elizabethan drama. He is designated in the dramatis personae as "A Puritan, chaplain to Belforest," and, although he is only a minor character, his position in the plot is an important one. Furthermore, his puritanical veneer is the very thing which makes possible his role. This in itself is significant, for so often in these plays the Puritan is a supernumerary, merely a character thrust into a scene for comic or satiric effect. Snuffle combines in his nature most of the eccentricities commonly attributed to 'the brethren' but he possesses all of them in a highly exaggerated form. He is most particular about being saluted 'without ceremony' for, as he says, "this worshipping kind of entertainment is a superstitious vanity." His talk is disgustingly pious, but all the while he is engaged in avaricious, deceitful measures and is living a base, sensuous life. He prides himself on his 'plainness' and his 'truth of conversation' yet he hypocritically inveigles D'amville into giving him a diamond ring, by protesting, when D'amville is about to take an oath: "Profane not your lips with the foulness of that oath. I will rather take it. To save your oath, you shall lose the ring." D'amville, though uniting the vices of several villains in his own person, is correct in his estimate of his fellow-sinner:

> Yet but compare's profession with his life,
> They so directly contradict themselves.
> As if the end of his instructions were
> But to direct the world from sin, that he
> More easily might engross it to himself.

This is exactly what Snuffle does. Although the confidant of Charlemont regarding his marriage vows with Castabella, Snuffle schemes, already in this first scene in which he appears,[451] to help D'amville marry Castabella to his son Ronsard during the absence of Charlemont, because, as he puts it, "the unity of families is a work of love and charity." He later tries to persuade Belforest to permit Casta-

[451] *The Atheist's Tragedy*, 1, 2.

bella to marry Ronsard, for "verily that disobedience doth not become a child. It proceedeth from an unsanctified liberty." At the same time he attempts to have Castabella break her vow to Charlemont because the absence of her lover would seem to indicate that he no longer is in love. He ends his argument with an involuntary and indirect satire of 'The Family of Love':

> Love still desires the presence of his love.
> Verily he is not of the family of love.

The reader heartily joins with Sebastian in exclaiming:

> Verily your gravity becomes your perished soul
> As hoary mouldiness does rotten fruit.[452]

Yet, according to Tourneur's picture, this is a true characterization of Snuffle, though we know it is a gross misrepresentation of the Elizabethan Puritan.

D'amville constantly uses this 'precisian' as a tool to carve out his nefarious schemes, because from Snuffle proposals come "religiously" and thus save his foul projects "from suspicion." [453] Languebeau supplies a touch of real humour to the plot when Charlemont—who has been reported as dead—returns and is taken for a ghost. Languebeau fearfully exclaims, "'tis profane. Spirits are invisible. 'Tis the fiend in the likeness of Charlemont. I will have no conversation with Satan." [454] Later he tries to calm D'amville, when the latter thinks he sees a ghost, by assuring him that "their walking spirits are mere imaginary fables. There's no such thing in *rerum natura.*" [455] The most despicable manner in which Snuffle serves as a tool is in connection with Levidulcia's immoral practices. She takes Snuffle along, for "the credit of his company defends my being abroad from the eye of suspicion." Languebeau is conscious of his mission, for he says: "I perceive the purity of my conversation is used but for a property to cover the uncleanness of their purpose." It is in this scene that the hypocrisy of Languebeau Snuffle is revealed in all its filthy hideousness, for he here indulges in similar unclean 'purposes', to be sure 'only in the way of holiness'; and afterward excuses himself by saying:

[452] *The Atheist's Tragedy*, 1, 4.
[453] *Ibid.*, 2, 4.
[454] *Ibid.*, 3, 2.
[455] *Ibid.*, 4, 4.

> The flesh is humble, till the spirit move it
> But when 'tis raised it will command above it.[456]

When Snuffle and the other malefactors are brought before the judge, he excuses his presence in a bawdy house by saying "the purpose that carried me thither was with the spirit of conversion to purify their uncleanness." But the judge is not so easily deceived and sends Snuffle back to candle-making—the occupation from which Lord Belforest had taken him—with this appropriate admonition: "You may give the world more light with that, than either with instruction or the example of your life." The reader heartily endorses this sentiment and joins in the laugh in which no doubt the Elizabeth audience indulged when Snuffle regretfully sighs:

> Thus the Snuffle is put out.[457]

In contrast to Tourneur's sharply-drawn Snuffle are the sketchy characters of the murderer, his sister and his man, all three belonging to the Puritan faith, found in *Two Lamentable Tragedies.* The fact that they are Puritans is used more as a means of furthering the plot and pointing the moral than as an excuse to berate the sect. Thomas Merry has murdered the chandler and his boy for their bag of gold. To shield Merry, his wife Rachael and his man Williams agree to keep the murder secret, though Merry refuses to "swear an oath" that he will do so. The Watchmen show, in their discussion of Merry, after his apprehension, the dramatist's desire to indirectly satirize the sect.

> First Watchman:
> Of all the men that lived in London walls
> I would have thought that Merry had been free.
> Second W.:
> Is this the fruit of Saint-like Puritans?
> I never liked such damn'd hypocrisy.
> Third W.:
> He would not lose a sermon for a pound,
> An oath he thought would rend his jaws in twain
> An idle word did whet God's vengeance on;
> And yet two murders were not scrupulous.[458]

[456] *The Atheist's Tragedy,* 4, 2.
[457] *Ibid.,* 5, 2.
[458] 4, 9.

Williams escapes with branding. At the execution of Merry and Rachael the dramatist shows his sympathetic attitude, in marked contrast to the malicious attitude toward the Puritan's execution in *A Knack to Know a Knave.*

Middleton's authorship of *The Puritan* is questioned, but in the light of his later plays it is by no means improbable. The play is a satire of both widows and puritans, in particular of puritanical widows, although Lady Plus has few of the characteristics commonly attributed to the Precisians. She cares more for the pleasures of this world than for the satisfactions of the next. However, she is not altogether a hypocrite nor yet an enthusiast, but merely a widow who grieves inconsolably for her dead husband while at the same time being ready to accept the advances of the first comer. But the "widow" in this play contributes less to the subject of the play than do several deceitful humbugs—Nicholas, Oath, Simon and Frailty—who pose as Puritans, banter each other for their treachery and are finally exposed. They are introduced as being "in black scurvy mourning coats, with Books at their Girdles, as coming from Church" and reveal themselves as Puritanical scrape-shoes" and "half-christen'd catamites." [459] In answer to Oath's statement that Nicholas shall take care of Captain Idle while the latter is in prison, the Captain indignantly says, "I'd sooner expect mercy from an usurer when my bond's forfeited, sooner kindness from a lawyer when my money's spent, nay, sooner charity from the devil, than good from a Puritan." [460] This opinion is almost justified in the case of Nicholas, who is the leading Puritan character in the play. The others can persuade him to obtain the chain which is to be used in getting Captain Idle out of prison only by drawing a very fine distinction between stealing and robbing, for Nicholas reasons that "anything else that I can do, had it been to rob, I would have done't; but I must not steal; that's the word, the literal 'Thou shalt not steal'." [461] Since they consent to make this distinction, Nicholas stealthily and, as he says later, "most puritanically" picks up the master's chain and delivers it to the conspirators.[462] Idle voices what

[459] *The Puritan,* 1, 2.
[460] *Ibid.,* 1, 3.
[461] *Ibid.,* 1, 4.
[462] *Ibid.,* 1, 4.

to him is a real puzzle, when, speaking of Nicholas he says, "Though he be a Puritan, yet he will be a true man"; and in Pyeboard's opinion Nicholas is "a good knave, worth a hundred Brownists." [463] Pyeboard has no sympathy with these self-complacent hypocrites and in referring directly to the deceased husband of Lady Plus, indirectly to all Puritans, as he understands them, expresses his and Middleton's disgust with the entire sect:

"There's the devil, there's the devil! True, he thought it sanctity enough, if he had killed a man, so it had been done in a pew; or undone his neighbour, so it had been near enough to the preacher. O, a sermon's a fine short cloak of an hour long, and will hide the upper part of a dissembler. Church! ay, he seem'd all church, and his conscience was as hard as the pulpit." [464] Here is bitter satire of a sect most repugnant to the dramatist. The material is very loosely organized; none of the pictures are fully drawn; and the author modifies his expression and slightly relents in the concluding scene. When these knaves have been brought to judgment, Sir Godfrey, who represents a better class of Puritans, is permitted a few words. As Nicholas is accused of stealing, Sir Godfrey exclaims:

> O villain! one of our society,
> Deemed always holy, pure, religious,
> A puritan a thief! When was't e'er heard? [465]

Middleton devoted most of a play, *The Family of Love,* to this type of satire. Although a misrepresentation and limited to one special group, it is one of the most nearly complete pictures of the sect to be found in Elizabethan drama. Sensuality is the particular sin hiding under the Familists' cloak of religion. The main tenet of the sect—that the feelings of divine love toward one another constitute the essence of religion—is perverted into a gross and ludicrous farce to serve as both theme and background for this play.

The leading female adherent of this group, Mistress Purge, is presumably very sanctimonious, but she is overtaken in several love affairs with 'the brethren' and much wit and sarcasm ensue at the expense of the sect through this medium. Lipsalve, a gallant who excuses his philandering with "Love's as proper to a courtier as pre-

[463] *The Puritan,* 3, 4.
[464] *Ibid.,* 2, 1.
[465] *Ibid.,* 5, 4.

ciseness to a puritan" would speak of love to Mistress Purge but she tells him that she has "another object, a better love than his." [466] Lipsalve feels that "she speaks pure devotion; she's impenetrable; no gold or oratory, no virtue in herbs nor no physic will make her love." [467] He also persuades Gudgeon, another courtier, that they may further their amatory pursuits by becoming members of 'The Family.' "Off with that filthy band . . . on with your robe of sanctity" orders Lipsalve and Gudgeon asks: "Why must we shift ourselves with this demure habit, if impossible to be of the Family and keep our own fashion?" But Lipsalve assures him: "Tut, man, the name of a gallant is more hateful to them than the sight of a corner-cap. Hadst thou heard the protestation the wife of a bellows-mender made . . . against gallants, thou had forever adjured breeches." He also tells him to "speak pitifully, look scurvily and dissemble cunningly" so that they may "quickly prove two of the Fraternity." [468] The 'converts' are admonished by Mistress Purge to "never hereafter frequent taverns nor tap-houses, no masques nor mummeries, no pastimes nor playhouses"; and when they are amazed at such rigid discipline she relents with, "Yes, on the days which profane lips call holy-days you may take your spaniel and spend some hours at the ducking pond." [469] She had earlier expressed her distaste for the theatre—when Lipsalve had become enthusiastic about Samson's lifting of the town gate at a play—by exclaiming: "Fie, fie, 'tis pity young gentlemen can bestow their time no better: this playing is not lawful, for I cannot find that either plays or players were allowed in the prime church of Ephesus by the elders." [470]

A male member of 'the Family', pompous old Dryfat, also serves as a target for Middleton's satire and sarcasm. Dryfat claims to be 'of the society' and is questioned by Mistress Purge as to his uprightness and general qualifications. As proof that he has entered into the 'right way' he launches into a sanctimonious harangue calculated to win her approval, saying: "First, I live in charity, and give small alms to such as be not of the right sect; I take under twenty i' the hundred, nor no forfeiture of bonds unless the law tell my

[466] *The Family of Love*, 3, 2.
[467] *Ibid.*, 2, 4.
[468] *Ibid.*, 4, 1.
[469] *Ibid.*, 4, 1.
[470] *Ibid.*, 1, 3.

conscience I can do't; I set no pan on a'Sundays, but feed on cold meat dressed a'Saturdays; I keep no holy days nor fasts, but eat mort flesh a'Fridays of all days i' the week; I do use to say inspired graces, able to starve a wicked man with length; I have Aminadabs and Abrahams to my godsons, and I chide them when they ask me blessing: and do hate the red letter more than I follow the written verity." [471]

Club, the servant, is asked by Mistress Glister what kind of creatures these Familists are and he tells her 'with reverence' that they are "the most accomplished creatures under heaven; in them is all perfection," giving as his reason that they "love their neighbors better than themselves." But Middleton's praise always has its barb for the very next quip assures us that "they love them better than their husbands, and husbands and wife being one, therefore better than themselves." [472] Dryfat hopes to see his friend Gerardine a Familist; and this old knave, summing up both his qualifications and the hypocrisy this play seeks to expose, says: "I hold most of their [the Familists'] principles already. I never rail nor calumniate any man but in love and charity. I never cozen any man for any ill will I bear him, but in love and charity to myself; I never make a neighbour a cuckold for any hate or malice I bear him, but in love and charity to his wife." [473] As Middleton paints these people, they are truly, in Dryfat's phrase, "a most Pharasit-hypocritical crew." [474] In fact, the attack at times becomes so vituperative as to lose its effect and become ridiculous by its very exaggeration. Regarding Middleton's picture of the Familists, Alden observes: "Classifying them under the general name of Puritan, as was often done, cast a slur upon the latter." [475] This is only too true, for Middleton makes no distinction between Puritans and Familists and even less distinction between the fanatics and the more sane believers among the Familists themselves.

In *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* some unnamed Puritans figure in a christening scene. These are not treated quite as derisively as are some others in Middleton's plays, but their speeches are always given

[471] *The Family of Love,* 3, 3.
[472] *Ibid.,* 2, 4.
[473] *Ibid.,* 3, 3.
[474] *Ibid.,* 3, 3.
[475] *Bartholomew Fair,* Introduction, p. 30.

a ridiculous twist, as they utter in most solemn manner words carefully calculated to bring a laugh from the audience. The intimate details of family life in the following scene show to what lengths the dramatist went in his misrepresentation of this much-satirized sect. In speaking of the child about to be christened, the First Puritan hopes that "her education may be pure" in order that she may "become one of the faithful." [476] As the people are entering for the christening, the Gossips are quarreling about precedence, but the First Puritan, with a too-well-calculated spirit of humility says: "Come, sweet sister; we go in unity, and show the fruits of peace, like children of the spirit," to which the Second Puritan replies: "I love lowliness." [477] The First Puritan makes certain that the child is,

> Well kursen'd i' the right way,
> Without idolatry or superstition,
> After the pure manner of Amsterdam.

But the following conversation shows that she is not altogether successful:

> THIRD GOSSIP:
> 'Tis a large, child, she's but a little woman.
> FIRST PURITAN:
> No, believe me,
> A very spiny creature, but all heart;
> Well mettled, like the faithful, to endure
> Her tribulation here, and raise up seed
> 'Tis the spirit; the sisters are all like her.
> SECOND GOSSIP:
> She has all fine children, Gossip.
> THIRD GOSSIP:
> Ay, and see how fast they come!
> FIRST PURITAN:
> Children are blessings,
> If they be got with zeal by the brethren.
> I have five at home.

As the child is presented with the usual christening present, an apostle spoon, the First Puritan says, "sure that was Judas with the red beard," and the Second Puritan replies:

[476] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, 2, 3.
[477] *Ibid.*, 2, 4.

> I would not feed
> My daughter with that spoon for all the world.
> For fear of coloring her hair; red hair
> The brethren like not, it consumes them much;
> 'Tis not the sisters' colours.[478]

The greater part of the second scene of act three of *Two Wise Men and All the Rest Fools,* 1619, is devoted to the characterization of Lamia, a Puritan wife. She enters "with a cudgel an ell long, and countering to be a Puritan, lifting her eyes upward." Rusticus ventures to ask where she may have been the past three days, and in her answer Lamia gives one of the most effective and at the same time one of the most delightfully humourous satires of the delight the Puritans took in 'contemplation.' She answers, "Why should you ask so foolish a question? You know that I must frequent my contemplation: in which I cannot be less than two or three days; the fervor of the spirit is such among the elect that they may not depart in short time from their meditations, especially having such learned teachers among us, that are never wearied, and willing to accompany and conduct us in the darkest dangers. O the delights, pleasures, and sweet delectations that we feel during the time of these sweet contemplations, that we think no time contentedly spent but when we are employed in these exercises . . ." A little later she "openeth her Bible, and makes show to read, and many times turns her eyes with the white upward"; whereupon, Hortano, her long-suffering husband, says: "That is her rod of discipline, and a strange thing it is which now I tell you. She is never so rapt up in her devotions, but if I commit the least fault (as wretched man that I am many times I do, and my best actions are abominable) she perceives it presently (and yet is deaf to all other noise) and she comes to me fiercely in the heat of her charity, and corrects me very handsomely with that wand." Truly, as Rustico remarks, she is a "very religious professor." She beats her husband soundly because he has not been at home for three days, justifying her action with: "It is lawful and possible for me to extract tears from his flinty heart with this rod of discipline, correcting him as the spirit moveth me." This 'correction' is so effective that in his will the husband includes this final phrase: "All my breeches I bestow upon my beloved wife"—

[478] *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,* 3, 2.

and thus ends the scene. Although there is no doubt that Lamia's overzeal and Hortano's meekness are both overdrawn, it is all done in a spirit of good fun and kindly satire, with no trace of the maliciousness so evident in many of these portraits. One can almost imagine even a broad-minded Puritan seeing satire of this type—were he to attend the theatre—and thoroughly enjoying its splendid English humour.

Jonson, as we have seen, has been observing and occasionally writing 'about' the Puritans, voicing in passing his dislike for their peculiarities and showing his keen penetration of their weaknesses. All these random thrusts are being accumulated for a genuine outburst. This preliminary study gave Jonson a detailed knowledge of the Puritans. It is as though he had mingled with them in their secret meetings, on the street or at familiar haunts such as Blackfriars and Banbury, carefully noting all the many interesting, strange and annoying characteristics of these people.

Thus when, in 1610, Jonson in *The Alchemist* for the first time drew full portraits of the Puritans, he was but extending the application of the knowledge that he already possessed. Moreover, the satirical form of this comedy is peculiarly adapted to a fuller treatment of the subject. The Puritan characters of the play constitute only one of several groups of rogues and dupes whose exposure forms the theme of *The Alchemist*. Tribulation Wholesome, who is a pastor of Amsterdam, and Deacon Ananias, a deacon of the same city, are two old Pharisees whose piety fairly impels them to connive with the scoundrel Subtle in his unlawful coinage. Ananias very delightfully characterizes himself as,

> . . . a servant of the exiled brethren;
> That deal with widow's and orphan's goods,
> And make a just account unto the saints, a deacon.

He disclaims all knowledge of the language of science, insisting that "all's heathen but the Hebrew." [479]

As Ananias and Tribulation come to negotiate for the philosopher's stone (meaning of course the money 'the brethren' are to derive from this unlawful coinage), they try to gloss it over as a scheme which is to "Hasten on the work for the restoring of the silenced saints."

[479] 2, 1.

Ananias has twinges of conscience and feels that the "heathen" Subtle "speaks the language of Cannan" and has "the visible marks of the beast in his forehead;" but Tribulation's conscience is less tender and he counters with a classical hypocritical speech:

> Good brother, we must bend unto all means
> That may give furtherance to the holy cause . . .
> The children of perdition are ofttimes
> Made instruments even of the greatest works . . .
> It may be so
> When as the work is done, the stone is made,
> This heat of his may turn into a zeal
> And stand up for the beauteous discipline.

Tribulation further expresses the willingness of "the brethren to lend their willing hands to any project the Spirit and you direct." Ananias is less eager to connive, and when he protests Subtle finally becomes impatient and launches into a tirade against the principles and practices of hypocritical Puritans. He tells them they shall no more need—

> . . . Your holy vizards, to win widows
> To give you legacies; or make zealous wives
> To rob their husbands for the common cause:
> Nor take the start of bonds broke but one day,
> And say they were forfeited by providence.
> Nor shall you need over night to eat huge meals,
> To celebrate your next day's fast the better;
> The whilst the brethren and the sisters humbled,
> Abate the stiffness of the flesh . . .
> Nor shall you need to libel 'gainst the prelates,
> And shorten so your ears against the hearing
> Of the next wire-drawn grace. Nor of necessity
> Rail against plays, to please the alderman
> Whose daily custard you devour: nor lie
> With zealous rage till you are hoarse.[480]

Tribulation is forced to admit that these are "ways that the godly brethren have invented for propagation of the glorious cause," but he too becomes impatient with the "ignorant zeal" of Ananias. Here Subtle, true to his name, slyly affects forbearance with these people and changes into the Puritan manner of speaking, stating that he must—

[480] *The Alchemist*, 3, 2.

> For charity and conscience sake
> Now see the most be made for my poor orphan.
> Though I desire the brethren too good gainers.

As soon as Ananias realizes that considerable money is to be made he is quite ready to enter into an agreement to engage in unlawful coinage, accepting Subtle's distinction that "it is not coining, it is but casting." [481] Ananias still has occasional qualms of conscience for he later reports that 'the brethren,'

> Have been in prayer and meditation for it;
> And 'tis revealed no less to them than me
> That casting of money is most lawful.[482]

Thus backed by all 'the brethren' Tribulation and Ananias continue their coining, and when discovered and punished depart in carts ordered—

> To bear away the portion of the righteous
> Out of this den of thieves.[483]

This realistic satire, combined as it is with the spirit of pure comedy, and containing these two portraits of Puritan hypocrites, is a forerunner of what Jonson is to bring to perfection in his Zeal-of-the Land Busy. No other dramatist so successfully blends humour and scathing disclosure of weaknesses and so skilfully employs all in laying bare roguery and satirizing foolishness. In these and other plays Jonson brought to perfection a way of treating characters, themes, and circumstances, differing, in several particulars, from that which had up to this time been the practice of dramatists. And certain subjects, prominent among them the satirizing of the Puritans, increased greatly in popularity.

Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair,* that superb picture of the life of his times, contains much satire of the Puritans and reads like a category of Puritan eccentricities. Long graces at table, gluttony, hypocrisy, lengthy disputes, dislike of tobacco, ale, amusements and popery, in addition to the sneers which these peculiarities brought from the non-Puritan characters in the play, constitute the foundation upon which

[481] *The Alchemist,* 3, 2.
[482] *Ibid.,* 4, 4.
[483] *Ibid.,* 5, 3.

the unusual popularity of this play was based. Win-the-fight Littlewit is advised by her husband to cut her lace so that in her "fit of longing" she may "play the hypocrite" but she answers: "No, I'll not make me unready for it. I can be hypocrite enough, though I were never so strait-laced." [484]

Most of the ridicule, however, centers about Zeal-of-the Land Busy who is justly characterized in the Induction as being "as fresh an hypocrite as ever was broached." After involved reasoning he permits himself to visit the Fair in order to condemn "the tents of the wicked," although he believes that "the whole fair is the shop of Satan." [485] Earlier in the play he had justified his visit to the Fair by saying: "In the way of comfort to the weak, I will go and eat. I will eat exceedingly, and prophesy; there may be a good use made of it too, now I think on't: by the public eating of swine's flesh, to profess our hate and loathing of Judaism, whereof the brethren stand taxed. I will therefore eat, yea, I will eat exceedingly." [486] After he has thoroughly enjoyed the meat and drink, he again falls into the habitual exhortation and in righteous indignation seizes the toys and overthrows the gingerbread tables, for he is thoroughly provoked by "the sin of the fair." He admonishes all to avoid the fleshly pig woman Ursula, for she has upon her the marks of "the three enemies of man; the world, as being in the Fair; the devil, as being in the fire; and the flesh, as being herself." [487] Condemned to sit in the stocks, Busy rejoices in persecution and denounces heartily one of 'the brethren' who is successful in his escape. As Busy is put into the stocks, he describes himself as "one that rejoices in his affliction and sitteth here to prophesy the destruction of Fairs and May-games, wakes, and whit-sun-ales, and doth sigh and groan for the reformation of these abuses," and when the other member of the sect escapes, Busy adds, ". . . Thou art a halting neutral: stay him here, stop him that will not endure the heat of persecution." [488] But when, during a scuffle, the stocks are left open, Busy is gone with this strange reasoning: "We are delivered by miracle, fellow in fetters, let us not refuse the means: this madness

[484] *Bartholomew Fair,* 1, 1.
[485] *Ibid.,* 3, 1.
[486] *Ibid.,* 1, 1.
[487] *Ibid.,* 3, 1.
[488] *Ibid.,* 4, 4.

was of the spirit; the malice of the enemy hath mocked himself." [489] At the puppet show, Jonson heaps his final coals of fire upon Busy's head. Busy objects to "your stage-players, rimers, and morrice-dancers, who have walked hand in hand, in contempt of the brethren, and the cause . . ." The old Puritan, despite his zeal "for the cause," is defeated and thoroughly humiliated in every argument until he throws all to the winds and excuses his lack of grace with the admission: "I am confuted, the cause hath failed me." Whereupon Leatherhead cries, "Be converted I pray you, and let the play go on." Busy makes his final exit with complete abandon, replying to Leatherhead: "Let it go on; for I am changed, and will become a beholder with you." [490] In his being gradually won over to the enjoyment of the things he had formerly denounced and in his final capitulation to the side of the enemy Busy is admitting the foolishness and narrowness of his former stand. He also provides the opportunity for Jonson to thus cleverly and pleasantly satirize the Puritan attitude toward worldly things, and himself becomes the classic example of hypocrisy in word and deed.

Goggle, the 'Amsterdam-man,' who figures prominently in the first scene of act four of Randolph's *Hey for Honesty* is a direct though utterly unworthy descendant of Jonson's Busy. Randolph does not blend Goggle's whims and defects into the plot of the play as did Jonson and he carries his ridicule beyond all excess. Goggle is the typical stage-Puritan, his actions, speech and other characteristics bearing the earmarks of the fanatical sectary. Although not engaged in coining, like Tribulation and Ananias, Goggle too has a "zeal to be rich" and comes to the "conventicle of Plutus" in order that he may obtain "abundance of holy gold and silver purified." He is eager, to use Carion's words, that the "zealous bags" may again be full of "holy silver and good brotherly gold." Carion engages in conversation with Goggle, addressing him as "a Geneva brother of sanctified snuffling, a pure elder of the precise cut" but Goggle indignantly replies: "No, but a zealous saint of Amsterdam whose nose is forward to promote the cause." Carion asks him whether a tailor may be a parson, and Goggle's reply is one of the best examples of the flowery speech affected by 'the Brethren.'

[489] *Bartholomew Fair,* 4, 4.
[490] *Ibid.,* 5, 3.

'Tis very fit, for first, his sacred parchment
Can take the measure of religion,
And from the cloth of a good conscience
Make up a suit for honest conversation:
Sewed with the thread of goodness, stitched i' the seams
With twisted silk of piety and innocence,
Lined with good thoughts and charitable actions:
The sacred shreds and snips of holy carsey
May chance to mend the garments of the righteous,
If Satan come to mend their guiltless robes.

A little later Carion pointedly asks about Goggle's "saint-like cloak and upright shoes," seemingly to elicit from him a eulogy of these tattered rags.

This huge cloak and I these thirteen years
Have freezed together, and these upright shoes—
Not upright once, till their ungodly soles,
That always went awry, were rightly mended
By a religious conscionable cobbler,
With leather liquor'd in most zealous tears—
These shoes, I say, ten years and three more
Have traced the conventicles of the brethren.

Soon the heretical Nevergood comes upon the stage, and between them the two wags succeed in rousing Goggle to the highest pitch of vituperation. Carion would like to see him come to the point of beating Nevergood but Goggle sees that his adversary is a "strong reprobate" and so he fears to defile his "purest hands" with such a "lump of vile corruption."

No, no I will not fight,
To make myself unsanctified,
I will dispute with thee, nose against nose,
And valiantly I dare to snuffle with thee
In defense of silver purified.

Religious bigotry, coupled with ignorance, hatred of all things having to do with the Catholic church, ridiculous insistence upon primitive observances, intolerance for the opinions of others, and actual physical hatred of all who differ from him, a false attitude toward wealth and poverty—all these objectionable traits has Randolph collected and put upon the head of this much-maligned and greatly overdrawn figure. Yet in the concluding act there is, if

such be possible, an even more distorted picture of the Pope and his realm. Randolph may have had both extremes in mind as he wrote the Preface to the Reader. "This," he says, "is a pleasant comedy, though some may judge it satirical . . . if it be biting, 'tis a biting age we live in. Then biting for biting."

Randolph satirizes the Puritans with more propriety and discrimination in another play, *The Muse's Looking Glass,* which he wrote at about the same time (before 1635). The first scene of the play is a dialogue between two Puritans, Bird and Mistress Flowerdew, "of the sanctified fraternity of Blackfriars," who sell pins, feathers, and looking-glasses to the play-goers of their locality. As the scene opens (incidentally the only instance of an Elizabethan play beginning with a Puritan's speech) Mistress Flowerdew says:

> See, brother, how the wicked throng and crowd
> To works of vanity! Not a nook or corner
> In all this house of sin, this cave of filthiness,
> This den of spiritual thieves, but it is stuff'd,
> Stuff'd, and stuff'd full, as is a cushion,
> With the lewd reprobate.

Bird agrees with her regarding these "shops of Satan" and both greatly deplore their rapid increase in number.

> For they are grown so obscene of late,
> That one begets another.

Living as they do in the very shadow of Blackfriars, they are well versed in their prejudices. . . .They deplore tragedies for the "killing one another" they have heard takes place, and despise comedies which "will abuse you, or me, or anybody." That the Puritans' ghosts must walk upon their stages is "flat conjuring" but nothing compared to the fact that "they will play the knave, the fool, the devil and all, for money." "O, that men endued with reason should have no more grace in them," sighs Mistress Flowerdew. She has heard her vicar call playhouses "the colleges of transgression, wherein the seven deadly sins are studied," and Bird fears that eventually the city will be made "an university of iniquity." He can scarcely wait for his companion to repeat a prayer she has heard a "brother" deliver:

> . . . . . That the Globe
> Wherein (quoth he) reigns a whole world of vice,
> Had been consum'd; the Phoenix burnt to ashes;
> The Fortune whipp'd for a blind whore; Blackfriars,
> He wonders how it 'scaped demolishing
> I' th' time of reformation: lastly, he wish'd
> The bull might cross the Thames to the Bear Garden,
> And there be soundly baited.

Bird agrees that this is "a good prayer," and answers Mistress Flowerdew's temporary qualm of conscience in regard to selling these vanities to the "wicked" by assuring her that " 'Tis fit that we, which are sincere professors, should gain by infidels."

Roscius, a player, then enters, and the two earnest reformers feel it their duty to convert him from his 'impious,' 'irreligious' and 'unwarrantable' calling. His reply bespeaks the impatience of many who were hampered by the prejudices and activities of those who opposed the playhouses.

> My spleen is up. And live you not by sin?
> Take away vanity, and you both may break . . .
> And you, sweet feather-man, whose ware though light,
> O'erweighs your conscience, what serves your trade,
> But to plume folly, to give pride her wings,
> To deck vain glory? . . . O dull ignorance,
> How ill 'tis understood what we do mean
> For good and honest! . . . On the Stage
> We set an usurer to tell this age,
> How ugly looks his soul: a prodigal
> Is taught by us, how far from liberal
> His folly bears him. Boldly, I dare say,
> There has been more by us in some one play
> Laugh'd into wit and virtue, than hath been
> By twenty tedious lectures drawn from sin
> And foppish humours.[491]

Here is one of the best answers to the Puritan's criticism of the theatre for its demoralizing influence. On the other hand, it is also true that the extremely suggestive masques and dialogues presented in this play and dozens of others throughout Elizabethan drama can scarcely have had a salutary moral effect on the audiences of the

[491] 1, 2.

seventeenth century. At one time our sympathies are somewhat inclined toward the two Puritans.

BIRD:
These are the things indeed the stage doth teach:
Dear Heart, what a foul sink of sin runs here!
MISTRESS FLOWERDEW:
In sooth, it is the common shore of lewdness.[492]

The two beholders, capable of enjoying only the "moralizing" parts, are wearied with the "foppishness" and "abomination" of the scene;[493] they even indulge in verbal combat with one of the players; and at one point they become so incensed the actors must beg their silence.[494]

As the play ends Mistress Flowerdew becomes convinced of its moral value. The Dance of the Virtues wins her completely.

Most blessed looking-glass,
That didst instruct my blinded eyes today!
I might have gone to hell the narrow way.

And Bird supports her enthusiasm:

Hereafter I will visit comedies
And see them oft; they are good exercises!
I'll teach devotion now a milder temper;
Not that it shall lose any of her heart
Or purity, but henceforth shall be such
As shall burn bright, although not blaze so much.[495]

Obviously the change is a forced one, merely a dramatic device to get a laugh from the audience. Yet nowhere in this play are Bird and his companion subjected to the indignities heaped upon Goggle. Roscius flays them for their assumption and hypocrisy but his rebuke is tempered with sincerity, even with a certain degree of kindliness, since he labors throughout ensuing scenes to change their narrow viewpoint. To this extent, Randolph's picture of Bird and Mistress Flowerdew is effective and convincing.

In 1641 Abraham Cowley wrote *The Guardian,* a play reminiscent of *An Humourous Day's Mirth* or *The Family of Love,* in that the action is carried on by Puritan characters who follow in the tradition

[492] *The Muse's Looking Glass,* 2, 3.
[493] *Ibid.,* 2, 4.
[494] *Ibid.,* 4, 1.
[495] *Ibid.,* 5, 4.

of the typical stage-Puritan. Later, in 1658, Cowley revised his play and changed the title to *The Cutter of Coleman Street.* The Preface to *The Cutter* states: "A comedy called *The Guardian* and made by me when I was very young, was acted formerly at Cambridge, and several times after privately during the troubles, as I am told, with good approbation . . . There are many things in it which I disliked. . . . I fell upon the changing of it almost wholly, as now it is." [496]

The Guardian is the more vigorous of the two but *The Cutter* gives evidence of a more mature workmanship. The characters of these plays are almost identical and have a similar Puritan background. The fact that *The Guardian* had to be acted 'privately during the troubles' and that, as Cowley states elsewhere in the Preface, it was criticised because of its content, partly explains the savage and bitter treatment accorded the Puritans in the later play as compared with the prejudiced but less bitter sarcasm of *The Guardian.* The prologues would seem to disavow this statement for that of *The Cutter* is impersonal and in jovial mood, while the following prologue of *The Guardian* is a direct challenge to the Puritans.

> Who says the time do learning disallow?
> 'Tis false; 'twas never honor'd so as now,
> When you appear, great Prince, our night is done:
> You are our Morning-Star, and shall b' our Sun.
> But our scene's London now, and by the rout
> We perish if the Roundheads be about:
> For now no ornament the head must wear,
> No bays, no mitre, not so much as hair.
> How can a play pass safely, when we know,
> Cheapside-cross fails for making but a show?
> Our only hope is this, that it may be
> A play may pass too, made extempore.
> Though other arts poor and neglected grow,
> They'll admit Poetry, which was always so.
> Besides the Muses of late have been
> Sanctifi'd by the verse of Master Prynne.
> But we condemn the fury of these days
> And scorn as much their censure as their praise
> Our muse, blest Prince, does only on you rely;
> Would gladly live, yet not refuse to die.

[496] Both plays are edited by Grosart, "Cowley", 1.

A number of the scenes in *The Guardian* take place in the home of the Widow, a Puritan landlady, who in the first scene of the play soundly berates the young gentlemen who carouse in her house. Presently, Cutter, the boldest of them, tells his companions he has fallen in love with the Widow's daughter, Mistress Tabitha. Doggeral exclaims: "We shall have him turn Brownist now and read comments upon the Revelations. But canst thou put off swearing with Buffe? canst thou abstain in the middle of long grace from crying a plague upon him, the meat's cold? can thou repeat scripture enough to make a Puritan?" The Cutter replies: "Let me alone. I'll deal with no oath above God's fatlikins, or by my truly; exclaim upon the sickness of drinking healths, and call the players rogues, sing psalms, hear lectures; and if I chance to preach myself, woe be to the act, the object, the use, and application." [497] Tabitha consents to be married, being "commanded from above" and The Cutter, again affecting Puritan speech, says: "There is a Godly creature [498] within, that never was defiled with cap and surplice, never wore that gambol call'd the Hood, even he shall join our hands." [499] The sixth scene of the last act is a most infamous one. The Cutter contrives to get his bride drunk and together they bring added reproach to the already odious name of 'Puritan.'

Fiery Captain Blade is the most original and interesting character of the play, and when he signifies his intention to marry the Puritan Widow, his confidant, Aurelia, flatly but charmingly disapproves: "Why she shall have all the silenc'd Ministers humming and hawing thrice a week; not a dish o' meat but will be longer a blessing than a roasting. I shall never hear my Virginals when I play upon 'um, for her daughter Tabitha's singing of psalms. The first pious deed will be to banish Shakespear and Ben Jonson out of the parlor, and to bring in their rooms Mar-prelate, and Pryn's works. You'll never endure't, Sir. You were wont to have a sermon once a quarter at a good time; you shall have ten a day now." To all of this, Blade replies, with supreme confidence: "Let me alone to deal with 'um, if any of her eating talking tribe show their ears here, I will so use her tribe, that they shall free the Pope and call me Antichrist here-

[497] 2, 2.
[498] Not named here but called Zephaniah Fats in the later play.
[499] 5, 1.

after: and the Widow, I'll warrant you, I'll convert: I'll carry her to plays, instead of Lectures; she shall see them, as well as the dancing o' the ropes, and the Puppet-play of Nineveh." [500]

In the revised version, *The Cutter of Coleman Street,* where the most grossly exaggerated satire marks the Puritans' speech and visions, the Cutter comes on the stage "in a Puritanical habit," declaring he is no longer Cutter but Abednego—a name which was revealed to him in a vision. This name signifies "Fiery Furnace, and Tribulation, and Martyrdom." He is to die, to be miraculously raised, and "to return upon a purple Dromedary, which dignifies Magistracy," the ax called "Reformation" in his hand, with which he is to strike "upon the Gate of Westminster Hall, and cry, down Babylon, and the Building called Westminster Hall is to run away and cast itself into the River and then Major General Harrison is to come from the North upon a sky-coloured Mule, that signifies heavenly Instruction." A bit later he continues: "He is to have a Trumpet in his mouth as big as a Steeple and at the sounding of that Trumpet all the Churches in London are to fall down . . . and then Venner shall march up to us from the West in the figure of a Wave of the Sea, holding in his hands a Ship that shall be call'd the Ark of the Reform'd. . . . I do hear a silent voice within me, that bids me rise up presently, and declare these things to the congregation of the Lovely in Coleman-Street." [501] The Cutter continues this exaggerated burlesque in the next act, stooping to a lewdness and commonness that can only reflect more discredit upon the author than upon the Puritans.

Three years after the close of the theatres there appeared a play called *The Country Innocence or The Chambermaid Turned Puritan,* listed by Langbaine as the work of Anthony Brewer but later, in the extent version, 1677, revised, and credited on the title page to John Leanerd. In a paper entitled "Some Stage Quakers," W. W. Comfort comments concerning this play, and some fourteen others which appeared after 1700: "It is evident that what struck the worldly men and women most in the creed of the Quakers was the plainness of their manner of life, the peculiar jargon which they were believed to speak, their objection to certain worldly diversions

[500] *The Guardian,* 4, 7.
[501] 3, 12.

such as the theatre and luxury of dress and personal adornment. Some knowledge is evident . . . of their church policy. They are throughout regarded as a peculiar people by those of the world who surround them, and some credit is given them for the virtue of simplicity, honesty and personal righteousness." [502] Speaking of *The Country Innocence* in particular Dr. Comfort says: "Miserable comedy as it is without any saving trait, one wonders who could ever have printed such filthy trash. Not until the fifth act do we meet the Quaker note, which is here, as often elsewhere, confused with the Puritan in general." [503] This criticism is more than justified, as excerpts from the play will show. The greater part of Act 5 is devoted to this Quaker episode, which seems to be introduced largely for comic effect, since it has practically no connection with the main plot. It is evident from the first that the dramatist failed to distinguish between the terms "Quaker" and "Puritan" for according to the stage directions Rash enters "like a Puritan, running, and Bab, like a Puritan following him."

RASH:

Keep off I say, do not pursue the faithful; hast thou not already metamorphosed me from a man, into a Monster? from a Reverent Citizen into a dishonorable Badge of Antiquity? I feel the horns, yea the very horns of the Beast as it were rebel against the Flesh, and tell me I am transformed.

BAB:

From a Monster to a Saint? Ah consider what a vile trade you follow'd, how you cheated this, that and to'ther Friend, and all for want of the true light, which now is plentifully bestow'd upon Thee.

RASH:

A true light one you were indeed. . . . But have a care, consider, I may reform, I may find out the ill turnings, the evil meanings and the sinful doings of the Brethren; and then reassuming my so late lost Religion, be advanc'd the Cities head, and, as one of its grave Fathers has already sacrific'd the Devil and the Pope, and other the less faulty, and harmless sinners of the Age; I may bend all my fury towards you, and with my sword of destruction, which is the Beam of Justice, sweep ye all into that honorable Mansion, *Bridewell.*

An old gentleman enters with Gregory, and Rash's zeal "pricks" him to give them "some dehorting words of Exhortation." Gregory,

[502] *F. H. A. Bulletin,* xiv, 13.
[503] *Ibid.,* 1-2.

however, shows his sword and Rash hastily says, "No, I smell an Italian in it, I defy thee." He refuses to join them in a drink, insisting, "I will first turn Martyr, and take my affliction patiently, 'tis the oath of the Brethren." He is even willing to be hit, for he is armed "with spiritual armor." Bab interposes, "Cease wicked man to persecute the Faithful. These are not stripes of Love." After Gregory leaves, Rash insists this his zeal "must find revenge," for, "this persecution I find is the Badge of the brethren."

Then, according to stage directions, "enter Mr. Will as a Quaker." Mr. Will begins to question this "dear brother" regarding his part in "this worldly warfare."

RASH:

Not without great danger of Satan's devices, but being confidently arm'd with the Spirit, I came off without any corporal harm, yet I suffered notwithstanding, the persecution of the sword, and had that Hellish liquor Sack most scornfully flung into my eyes, which made my zeal grow hot to revenge me of my persecutors.

WILL:

It was well done, and show'd the stoutness of a Brother. The Element is good, if in the hands of a zealous Brother: which makes me seldom be without it.

Now that Rash is with his own brethren and does not have to preserve appearances he can add his hearty approval to the 'bottle,' from which Mr. Will says he himself drinks at a "Sermon of one Mr. Thrumps." At mention of Mr. Thrumps (the Quaker having abjured even the Puritans' favorite word 'pastor') Babs speaks up: "Indeed, I knew him, he was silenc'd because he broke a new Pulpit. A very painful man, and much given to labor and travel." Taking the bottle she turns to Rash, saying, "Ananias, take some of this, 'tis good to digest affliction," and he accepts her counsel as "at this time very comfortable." All this is no more than a poor revival of the well-worn methods of Middleton, Brome, and others for bringing disrepute upon their enemies.

In a song at the end of the play the dramatist delivers his last blow at these "serious Fops"—

These Lambs of a Fold, like young Adamites move,
Make Test their enjoyment, Religion their love:
In a Pulpit they'll, like a Spark in a Coach,
Thump the Cushion and Preach, though they're big with debauch.

Part of the epilogue seeks to justify, in a measure, the vile aspersions the author has cast upon Puritan and Quaker alike. His grudge harks back to that one sore point which constantly fomented the strife between Puritan and dramatist.

> I see your looks prognosticate a storm,
> And if you please, your Quaker shall reform.
> Religious Players, in this wicked Age,
> Appear like Devils, and disgrace the Stage:
> These serious Fops have ruin'd all our pains.

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